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tinuation of African cultural traditions was not easy, certain things did persist. While the material facts of the life of the slaves was at once subordinated to European patterns — in dress and implements and to a certain extent in housing, for example [25] — yet in other matters they could live as they had lived in Africa. Thus one account of the time, quoted by de Vassière,[26] tells how the slaves carried on communal hoeing, timing their strokes to the rhythms of songs that begged some favor of their visitor, or to songs of praise (and, when the white observer was not present, undoubtedly also singing songs of derision), in the characteristic African fashion that, as will be seen, has survived in Haitian peasant life to this day. Similarly their traditions of cooking, of eating, of fixing the time for their meals (despite St. Mery's comment that "the Negro has no other rule of eating than the demands of his appetite"), of respect for their elders; their attitudes toward death and their rituals of burial, their dances, their songs, and, above all, their non-Christian religious beliefs, all continued to be stamped with the mark of Africa.[28] On the other hand, opportunities to learn and imitate French customs were by no means neglected, for the prestige of the masters filtered through the ranks of the slaves until it reached even the field-hands, for the nearer in service the Negro was to the person of his master, the more Europeanized was his behavior and the prouder he was and the more he exploited his opportunities to follow European patterns of habit.[29] Not only did the house-servants imitate French dances,[27] but we are told how in Martinique, for example, all the slaves were taught these figures.[28] In the field of religion, also, the efforts of the Church to capitalize the royal edicts which made baptism of the slaves compulsory were far from vain, at least in so far as the outward manifestations of their acceptance of the faith were concerned. Writings of the time, however, do not omit comment on the discouragement of the missionizing Fathers who seriously undertook this task, because too often

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stant and in almost perfect accord with the hoes of all the other men in line. Pauses are frequent, and men often drop out of the line for a longer period of rest — even those not of the type laughingly called *majeurs,* who shirk their task and come to a *combite* principally to share in the feasting — and these, for the time being, join the singing with added verve. During the periods of rest, re-alignments are made and, if necessary, the direction of the line is changed; after a short time, however, the cry of the *simidor* rings out, the initial statement of a song is sounded, and as the chorus swings into the melody, the hoes rise again, the beat of the drum is begun, the plaintive notes of the *lambi* are heard, and the workers once more move down the field.[8]

Acting as the representative of the owner of the field to be cleared is a man who is called the *directeur.* If a large number of workers, a hundred or more, are assembled, he may divide them into two groups, assigning each half of the field, and then there is competition to see which group will first complete its allotted task. On such an occasion there would not only be more than one drum, but also more than one principal singer, or *simidor,* and the songs would thereupon have improvised words boasting of the prowess of the winning side, and ridiculing its opponents. The " director " also apportions the food, for it is customary to follow the rule which holds that since not all workers are equally eager or competent, so the rewards should not be the same for all. The shirkers are well known. They come but a little before sunset, or, arriving earlier, dawdle, walking about with their hoes and accomplishing but little during the afternoon. The lack of enthusiasm of these *majeurs* for work does not escape the " director," for though all who come to the *combite* must be fed, such men receive relatively little, while those who have worked the hardest not only are rewarded with dishes heaped with especially choice morsels of meat, but often find several sous when they reach the bottom of the dish.

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461 476 533 The *combite* songs are distinctive in Haitian music for their melodic quality. Sung in unison, as is characteristic of most forms of Negro music, they contain the statement of a theme by the leader and a response from a chorus, so that the contrast between this great volume of sound from the chorus and the solo voice of the *simidor* is singularly effective. It is not the melodic qualities alone that make these songs so appealing to the Haitians, however. At the *combite* a man not only learns all the gossip of the day, but enjoys learning and singing the songs which caustically comment on the shortcomings of neighbors, or evaluate the hospitality of those who have called *combites,* or detail scandal, phrased with sufficient directness to allow the reference of the song to remain clear, but warily, so as not to give the individual pilloried ground for direct recrimination. The *simidor* is thus a person to be feared, since in addition to his ability as a singer and a leader of song, he is also an outstanding improviser. As one Haitian expressed it, "The *simidor* is a journalist, and every *simidor* is a Judas!"

406 533 461 626 203

406 533 539 461 626 One or two examples of these songs will make clear their favor among a people to whose natural love of gossip is added a patterned relish for oblique public statement of individual shortcomings. The first comments on a miserly *combite* host:

À tè!	Down!
Moin dit, messieurs,	I say, messieurs,
Moin p'ralé nan combite ça-é	I went to that *combite*
Moin pas mangé.	[But] I did not eat.
Moin allé, moin pas joinne un grogue	I went, but I found no drink
Pour moin bwè.	To drink.
Assé-a! En è!	Enough! Up!
Moin dit, messieurs,	I say, messieurs,
M'allé nan combite ça-é	I went to that *combite*

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Moin pas joinne mangé	[But] I found no food
Pou' m'mangé.	To eat.

Another song refers to a pungent bit of local gossip, which, though known to everyone, concerned an affair that precluded the mention of names. This is usually the case, for it is not ordinarily deemed wise to make specific references; yet this must not be thought of as an invariable rule, as is shown by the fact that a number of these songs were recorded where names were mentioned with great freedom. Thus in Mirebalais as elsewhere, circumstances must govern cases; the composer of the following short song did not feel it politic to do more than recall the case:

Ca va reglé,	This will be arranged,
En é, o!	Up, o!
Affai' cousine germaine	The affair of a first cousin
A'c cousin germain.	With her first cousin.

Reference is also made to an impending quarrel where a suspicion of magic practices entered:

Moin dit, Juda,	I say, Judas,
Allé l'église;	Go to the church;
Quand ou apè tourné	When you return
Ou a quitté moin tranquille, o-o;	You will leave me in peace, o-o;
Si ou allé l'église,	If you go to the church,
Ou apè quitté moin tranquille, o-o.	You will leave me in peace, o-o.

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Still another song is a challenge, for in it the singer boasts that he is the equal of the man figuratively designated in it, and will cause trouble if resisted:

À tè!	Down!
M'apé mandé qui moune	I ask what person
Qui en dedans caille là.	Is in that house.

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Compère répond':	My friend replies:
"C'e' moin qui avec cousine moin."	"It is I who am with my cousin."
Assé-é!	Enough!
Moin en dedans déjà.	I am already inside.
En é-é-o!	Up, o!
Nan point taureau	No bull
Passé taureau.	Is better than [this] bull.
En é-o!	Up, o!

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Finally, there may be cited a composition which complains against a shirker who comes and eats, but does little work:

Samba, é-é,	Samba, *é-é,*
Moin vé ou malhonnet,	I see that you are a dishonest man,
Tonnèrre!	*Tonnèrre!* •
Moin planté maïs moin,	I plant my maize,
L'année rive,	The year rolls round,
Moin planté mangé,	I plant food,
Ou apè managé li.	You eat it.
En é-é-o!	In the air!
Moin planté zaboca,	I plant avocados,
Ça pou' ou mangé,	They are for you to eat,
Ou malhonnet-o.	You are a dishonest man-o.
Tonnèrre!	*Tonnèrre!*

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The field cleared and hoed, the work of planting begins. This is carried on in accordance with a well-defined calendar of agriculture, which takes as its starting-point the beginning of the rains. Maize, which matures quickly, is the first crop, and is planted during the latter part of March or early in April, unless the rains are delayed, when it is planted later that month. Congo peas, which mature less rapidly, are put

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• *Tonnèrre*, "thunder," is a Haitian-French oath; the original is retained because in translation its force is lost.

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trance of the house — three times if there is one door (for the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost), three times before each door if there are two entrances, and once before each door if there are three. The wedding procession goes to church on foot. The men, if they are from the countryside, are stiff, uncomfortable, and hot in their unaccustomed "best" clothing and their often painful shoes, while the women are also self-conscious in their new dresses. The elaborateness of the ceremony varies with the fee paid the priest, but at all events the clanging church bell is heard notifying the town and its environs that a marriage is being consecrated.

If the family of the bride or groom are well known in Mirebalais, a wedding reception may be given at their house for friends of the couple and of their parents, but the real festivities are held after the return to the new family home. As the procession approaches it, the "bush-priest," a functionary who, because of his knowledge of French, can read the prayers of the Church, waits at the gate with two aides, small boys or girls, each with a flag, one red and one white. He has sacred water in one hand and a lighted candle in the other, and as he pours this water on the ground three times he intones the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, the Credo, and other prayers. These concluded, hymns are sung by all the participants, and singing, a procession is formed with the "bush-priest" in the lead, followed by the flag-bearers, the couple who have just been married, arm in arm, the "godfather" and "godmother" of the marriage, as the witnesses are called, the parents of the bride and groom, and other close relatives. As the procession reaches the door of the house, it pauses and water is thrown on the ground three times; the circuit of the house is made twice again, and each time, as the door is reached, water is thrown, until, the third tour completed, the participants solemnly enter.

There coffee, liqueurs, wine, *kola*, and cakes are served to the principals and the more important members of the com-

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595 533 or if women who share the same mate meet in the market place, quarreling is invariably heard; or if one of them sings *point* — derisive songs — against the other and goes so far as to name the object of derision, fighting and court action follow.

58 595 684 Though many cases of *plaçage* are the result of affairs between young people which result in conception, it is essential in any event that the consent of the families of the man and the woman concerned be obtained to give the mating social validity. When the union is once entered upon, divorce occurs only with the abandonment or mistreatment of the woman, or her infidelity, for in these *plaçage* matches, the moral support of her family makes a man reluctant to send his wife away without ample justification. When a man does divorce a *placée* wife for reasons of infidelity, she may either go to another man or return to the home of her parents, where she supports herself. If after a period of years she has not established a household with another man, it often happens that her husband takes her back. Most frequently, however, where children have been born to a mating, a woman's infidelity is punished merely by beating; and proof that a wife is a wife whether or not she is legally "married" is offered by the Haitian man in this fact that a *placée* is beaten for this and less serious reasons as readily as a legal wife. Prompt [754] action is taken against the adulterer, which, though it may on occasion be as drastic as murder, generally takes the form of [848] recourse to magic charms. Women who carry on illicit relationships take all care, therefore, to guard unceasingly against the birth of offspring.

595 593 Many men, at least, hold that a man is often much closer to a *placée* than to a legal wife, for the former is more attentive and less demanding than the wife with her legally assured status and permanence of tenure. Thus it comes about that [454] *placée* spouses are frequently given generous money gifts, to be saved for the future of their children, while as a man grows older he may take up his residence with a *placée* wife, where

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the one possessed, possessions of this kind mean either that the *loa* needs baptism; or that, being baptized, its devotee has been negligent in serving the god.

No actual rite of baptism of a *loa* — or, as it is also termed, of *lavé tête*, "washing the head" — was witnessed, but the account of the ceremony given here, obtained independently from several persons, represents an adequate exposition of the rite as performed in Mirebalais. A room is prepared where the person whose *loa* is to be baptized must remain for three days. The mat or bed on which the neophyte rests is covered with fresh sheets and pillow-cases, and three changes of clothing are made ready, one of which must be entirely new for the last day of the ceremony. These are in the color of the god being "baptized"; that is, if the *loa* were revealed to be such a one as Damballa, Aida Wedo, or Gran' Erzilie, everything would be white, but if it were Gran' Siligbo, the colors would be blue and white; if Ogun, everything would be red; if Ossange, blue; where the god is one of the Pétro suite, such as 'Ti Kita or Bosu, everything would be black.*

During the three days' "retreat" the one whose *loa* is being consecrated lies alone. All day long the men and women of the family sit in the next room or outside the house, singing and praying, though at night they sleep, since "this is not a wake." They not only sing the songs sacred to the *loa* being baptized, but also the canticles of the Virgin, while prayers of the Church are recited under the leadership of the *prêt' savanne*, the "bush-priest" whose ability to read the prayers makes him an essential figure in all *vodun* rites. They may from time to time have "a little procession" about the room where the novitiate lies, when small banners in the color of the god are carried. Soft drinks and a *mangé sec* — a "dry" offering — are given the god, and white tapers and an oil lamp are

* A detailed listing of the names, attributes, and powers of the more widely worshipped *loa*, the colors, days, and trees or other places sacred to them, and the "squads" into which they are conceived to be formed, will be found in an appendix at the end of this book.

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lighted. Chicken and rice may also be cooked for any god except Gede, while chocolate and rice with milk are favored, since it is said "the *loa* love desserts" — a commentary on the very immediate and human character of these spirits.

The actual baptism, or "washing of the head," is performed on the third day of the ceremony by a *vodun* priest or priestess who is a member of the family, though any member who has important *loa* and the necessary *connaissance* may officiate if the membership of the family includes no priest. As at any baptism, there must be a godfather and godmother, and preference is given those who are the parents of twins or are themselves twins. The officiant must be possessed at the time, since, it is said, "one *loa* baptizes another." Leaves of the basilique tree are steeped in perfumed cold water, and the hands of the one who baptizes are first immersed in the liquid; then, while songs of the *loa* and canticles of the Virgin are sung, he washes the head of the person to be baptized. Possession occurs immediately, and the new devotee lies back, half conscious, while all others kneel, seeking word from the *loa* to learn if it is satisfied. If an affirmative answer is given, all retire, the person possessed remaining in the room to sleep through the night. A "ball," but not a *vodun* dance, may celebrate the event either the next day or later, but this is not obligatory, and most often those present, after eating, quietly disperse. The following day the one who has been baptized goes to the family place of worship and greets those who have helped him. Only one further rite is necessary, and this solely when the *loa bossal* is revealed to be a hostile god. Then the *loa*, after having been baptized, is "restrained" by being placed in a jar and buried, so it cannot later emerge and trouble the family of the one to whom it has come.[13]

The ceremony of baptism, in Mirebalais, is in no sense a first step into any *vodun* hierarchy, for, as will be seen, no such hierarchy exists in this valley. One important priest there derives his power from *loa* that have never been bap-

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based on the rituals that were observed. In every case at least two major officiants are necessary, the *prêt' savanne* and the *hungan*, though the role of the latter is the all-important one. Last-minute preparations are made during the final morning, but what is needed will have been accumulated over a period of many months. Tables to hold offerings — sometimes two, sometimes more — are arranged at the sacred places on the family habitation, usually near streams or great trees where the gods reside. Eggs, cereals, drinks, and cornmeal — the food of the gods — are brought, and the animals to be sacrificed are tethered near by. Early in the afternoon the family, dressed in white, assemble, while the *vodun* priest with cornmeal describes on the ground the cabalistic designs called *verver*, and he sees to it that all has its proper place on the altar, whether it be the ever-present crucifix, or the chromolithographs of the saints, or the bottles of "drink" — usually non-alcoholic — or cereals and flour of various kinds. Consecrated water must be on hand, particularly at the big "altar," as the table covered by a canopy to protect the sacred objects is called.

The first part of the ceremony is an *action de grâce*, which in Mirebalais requires an hour or more, but which is said to last two or three hours in southern Haiti. This ritual, entirely derived from the litany of the Church, must always precede any *vodun* ceremony of the kind being considered here. Its purpose is said "to set the *loa* in movement" and to notify them of the rites that are to come, but psychologically it also serves to assure the participants that they are not proceeding to the worship of African gods without having paid friendly homage to God, the ruler of the universe, and the saints. The songs and prayers are brought to a close by an *adoration*, when offerings of money are made by members of the family to pay the officiant. At this point the songs change to a more African rhythm, and the *vodun* priest takes active charge.

As darkness falls, on the first day of the rite, he summons the

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nals were being performed. If they failed to wave their banners vigorously or often enough, the one in charge chided them for their lack of zeal, whereupon their movements would become a kind of dance. During the *adoration* each member of the family was called upon to give coins or candles, the first for the *prêt' savanne*, though this was not his entire fee.

With the benediction, the *action de grâce* came to an end, and the solemn, tired voice of the *prêt' savanne* was heard intoning a hymn, which, in the usual fashion, was repeated by the assembled group until, without interlude, without even a pause, the interpolations of the chorus gradually changed, so that the rhythm became African, and, with the transition, the *vodun* priest took over the leadership. The *hungan* began by repeating several times the phrase which throughout the entire ceremony was to punctuate all its climaxes, "*Grâce* [*et*] *mise'corde*," and the family murmured it in response. He then ordered each member of the family to address himself to the *loa*, telling what troubles had befallen him and what favors he desired. An assistant now took six candles from the *trône*. Proceeding in a counter-clockwise direction, he described a large circle about that part of the meadow where the ceremony was to take place, fixing a candle in the ground at intervals. Four of these were for the four corners of the earth, one was for Mait' 'Bitation — the deity termed Master of the Habitation — and one for the Mait' Source — the Master of the Stream. When the members of the family, each holding a lighted candle, had formed in a line, they were bidden to place these candles in the earth within the area described by the six already there, and as they scattered over the sacred ground, little flickering flames dotted the hillside and the grassy meadow behind the *trône* in the deepening dusk.

Then all returned to the altar, and the *hungan*, taking the first of three plates made ready for him, began to describe *verver*. One plate held white cornmeal flour, one was filled with gray ashes, called Guinea flour, and the third contained

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a black powder of ground, roasted coffee beans. Starting at the tree near the "first" table for Bosu, he traced a white line that, passing the second table and the trees for Simbi, continued to the *tròne*, to which subsidiary motifs were then added in gray and black, making of the designs an intricate geometric composition.

With bell in hand and a small whistle in his mouth, both of which later were entrusted to his assistants, the *hungan* went about, blowing the whistle at intervals to call the *lòa*. Singing, he directed that a wooden boat-shaped basin containing water be placed in front and a little to the left of the *tròne* for washing the feet of the sacrificial animals. Though all the family were present, they were again ritually summoned in song to come with the sacrifices and were ordered to stand near by with lighted candles while the animals were bathed. As they gathered, the *hungan* became possessed by Simbi, who took it upon himself to set the fee for conducting this ceremony at 117.10 gourdes. When he announced this sum, loud pleas of poverty were heard from the family, while speaking through the priest, the god bargained with them until the sum of 110 gourdes was finally agreed upon.

The *hungan* now sang a long invocation, inviting the gods of all those places where Africans live to come. First the feet of the fowl were washed, then those of the pigs, and finally of the goat. Each fowl was passed over the body and head of every member of the family as it was presented with the requisite song to the proper *lòa* — the red and black cock for Legba, the black fowl for Gede, the red one for Ogun, the white for Dumballa, and the fowl with ruffled plumage for Congo Zandor. Then each was placed on the ground in front of three small piles of food taken from the *tròne*. They were watched with anxiety by all present, for the pecking at the food is a signal that the god accepts the animal given him. The small pigs for Ti Kita Demembré, and the boar for Bosu, were offered the same food as the fowls; the goat for Erzilie Gé Rouge was pre-

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sensed with the leaves on a branch of the sacred tree. All the animals ate, a favorable omen.

This ceremony was held during the rainy season, but the usual afternoon rains had held off. At this time, however — about eight o'clock — threatening clouds came up and soon the tropical downpour began. The heavy rain continued for more than an hour and the subsequent drizzle did not end until almost midnight, but this was not permitted to interfere with the proceedings. Now the participants took places before the "first" table, for Bosu, again with their offerings. Inasmuch as Bosu was the deity who had shown the greatest ill will toward the family, those present awaited the decision with heightened tenseness as the goat, frightened by the many people gathered about, hesitated long before he nibbled at the leaves held out to him by the *hungan*. But eventually all the animals ate, meeting this paramount test, and as each partook of the food the *hungan* several times called out "*Grâce misé'corde*," the family echoing their response with emotion. Now two men who had strong Bosu gods knelt before the table, and the fowls were again and again touched to their heads and passed over their bodies in gestures that described the sign of the cross, in order to induce their gods to come to them.

As the singing became louder and more rhythmical, various members of the family became possessed. The deities who responded to the calls were, in the order of their appearance, Kita, Ezilie, Simbi, Bosu, Damballa, and finally Gede (Papa Gedenibo). The possessions took their characteristic African form, with some of the possessed running about, jumping into the fire for Legba, and stamping on the embers with their bare feet, others reeling with arms waving, still others rolling on the ground, which, as the rain continued, soon became very muddy. Most of those under possession were women, but about nine-thirty one man became possessed by Simbi, and later another by Gede. As the *loa* "came" in ever greater

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number, exclamations of pleasure were heard that the gods were responding. Outwardly, the ritual seemed completely disorganized, the "*loa*" and the spectators moving, mud-bespattered, tense, from the table for Bosu to that for Simbi, and back, or to the *trône*.

The singing went on without interruption to the accompaniment of the bell and occasional blasts of the whistle. Among the songs heard during this period of possession were:

Bosu li join' qui chose a tè,	Bosu found something on the ground,
Pas remassé li.	Do not pick it up.
Bosu ma'ché,	Bosu goes about,
Li join qui chose a tè',	He found something on the ground,
Pas remassé li.	Do not pick it up.
Un va cutrave	You will come to harm
Si ou ramassé li.	If you pick it up.
Va enragé Bosu.	You will anger Bosu.
Simbi en Deux Eaux,	Simbi en Deux Eaux
M'we fé p'ou,	I do for you,
F'e p'moin,	Do for me,
Fi-a, Congo,	Help, O Congo,
Congo Zandor.	Congo Zandor.
Simbi Kita Kita, travaille pour nous,	Simbi Kita Kita, work for us,
Jodi-a pour nous,	Today for us,
Demain pou' zotl'.	Tomorrow for others.
Erzilie, o Lemba,	Erzilie, o Lemba,
M'ap' mandé coté Erzilie ye.	I ask, where is Erzilie.
Mangé a'paré.	The food is ready.
Gedenibo, derrière la croix, Gede,	Gedenibo, behind the cross, Gede.

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Devant Baron, Gede,	Before Baron, Gede,
Derrière la croix, Gede,	Behind the cross, Gede,
Jodi-a m'pé' nan sang m'we,	Today I am troubled,
Gedevi, vhele Gede, ça Gede,	Gedevi, call Gede, this Gede,
Jodi-a m'pas nan sang moin.	Today I am troubled.
Balai, rousé, cercle, quitté.	Cease to sweep, sprinkle, hoe.
Moin pas nan sang, Baron Samedi.	I am troubled, Baron Samedi.

Shortly after eleven o'clock the *hungan* intervened to calm those possessed, for the time was at hand to give the sacrifices. Summoning the family to assemble again before the *trône* with the offerings, he commenced a long ritual in which each creature was prepared by being carefully washed and combed, while the boar for Bosu was also fastidiously perfumed and powdered. At the direction of the *hungan*, the fowls were first offered, the killing taking place at a distance of some thirty or forty feet behind the *trône*. The chickens were held with the two wings and the head in the left hand, so that the neck was exposed. The knife was passed twice over the neck to describe a cross, after which each fowl was cleanly and skillfully dispatched. One of the assistants of the *hungan* held a small calabash in which some of the blood of each animal was caught, and another, knife in hand, sang with him that they were offering this *kokio* to the deity for whom it was intended. As the last of the chickens was being killed, the *hungan* left the *trône* and quietly strangled the pigeons for Damballa.

All possessions had ceased, except that of a man "mounted" by Gede and a woman by Simbi. The man particularly attracted much attention, for Gede is known as a gossip, and so diverting were his revelations of family scandal that all were too absorbed listening to him to show any interest in the sacrifice of the animals.

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fice of the animals. At one point the *adjanikon* holding the calabash in which the blood was caught threw it on the ground in anger, declaring that animals should not be killed for people who were too indifferent to come and sing the songs that accompany the giving of offerings. Some of those present thereupon detached themselves and came to watch the killing of the two small pigs, as the song, repeated over and over, changed to:

O minmin, moin couteau la,
Soso na pé tué, soso,
Jodi-a.

Oh, here, here is my knife,
A pig is to be killed, a pig,
Today.

At this point several other men joined in handling the larger animals, for now the one killing the sacrifices could only hold the mouth of each beast before he cut its throat. And when the boar was to be sacrificed, even more assistance was needed, and a line of rope had to be fastened about his snout before he could be handled at all. The killing was ended when the sacrificial goat was slaughtered, to the accompaniment of the song:

Ma'ze Louisa,
M'ap' tué ou jodi-a,
Pour Erzilie, 'Ti Kita,
Gé Rouge, Pié Sèche.

Miss Louisa,
I kill you today,
For Erzilie, 'Ti Kita,
Gé Rouge, Pié Sèche.

The calabash containing the blood was now placed on the *trône*, while the carcasses were gathered in an orderly pile in front of it. The *hungan* described a circle about the massed bodies with cornmeal, also making two white lines in the form of a cross over them. He then began to sing the *adoration* that follows every killing, while the family and all others present threw coins for him into the dish that rested on the bodies, only a few sous of which he gave to his assistants. This rite ended as the women came to him one by one, each to take a

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fore never return to trouble the living. As witness to this, he was now putting the cross in place, " which causes everything that is evil to flee," to remain until it rotted away.

Simbi djo was " restrained " where the *trône* had been; Lemba under the mango tree near the place of the table for Bosu. Some of the meat of the pigs was buried in these places with all other kinds of cooked food, and the gods were told that they were to repose there for from seven to seventeen years, after which they would again be fed. A cross of iron was buried with the cooked meat, and as each jar, both now and earlier, was put in place, this song was sung:

Poussé allé,	Get you gone,
Poussé allé,	Get you gone,
Icit pas pays ou.	This is not your country.
Ça lan Guinée,	It is Guinée,
Qui pays ou.	That is your country.

A violent rain-storm not only made it impossible to reach the place of the ceremony the following day, but also made it necessary for the family to defer all but a few of the more essential rites. The second day's ritual was thereupon put over to Saturday, when according to original intentions the *vodun* dance that had been planned to close this complex of ceremonies was to have occurred, but which in consequence was postponed until some weeks later.

The ritual of the second day of this *cérémonie* began much earlier than that of the first, for by about one-thirty in the afternoon the *action de grâce* was almost completed. As one approached, a newly dug mound of earth with a cross over it where the troublesome deities had been buried was to be seen just outside the land belonging to the family. The cross was draped with a black cloth, and was itself painted blue and white, while a rosary and a magic *garde* of native twine were suspended from it.

On this afternoon the ritual was performed in two places, a

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spot somewhat farther down the stream than the site of the earlier ceremony, and later at the family habitation on the hill. There was one table arranged as a *trône* and under its canopy, beside the *images*, the candles, and the crucifix, were white foods such as rice and white beans. Instead of Pétro *loa*, this time the ceremony was to bring Rada gods who were to be asked for children, good health, and good fortune. The *trône* was just below the confluence of two brooks, near some great palm trees. Near by was a weir, while in the larger stream, below the point of juncture, were two small natural pools.

When the *action de grâce*, which did not differ from that witnessed earlier, was ended, the *hungan* again made his *verver*, and these were yet richer in design than on the previous occasion. As he finished he took a number of the women of the family by the right hand, spinning each in turn several times to induce possession. The *loa* Damballa Siligwe "came" almost at once, possessing a woman who threw herself into the stream, threshing about as a "serpent." No one troubled himself to attend to her, however, as she emerged and walked about in her wet clothes behind the *trône* and in front of it, so that, according to the *hungan*, the *loa* became angry and would not come, thus making it necessary to sing many more songs of praise and entreaty. As he sang, the *hungan* seized one member of the family after another by the hand, spinning them about and making them kneel before the *trône* to bring the *loa*.

Moin dit Gran',	I say, Gran',
Bonjou', Gran',	Good-day, Gran',
Bonjou', bonjou'.	Good-day, good-day.
Enfants, la yo, Gran',	It is their children, Gran',
Qui ap mandé coumen nous ye-e,	Who ask how you are,
Enfants yo	Their children
Qui ap dit bonjou'.	Who say good-day.

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Damballa Wedo,	Damballa Wedo,
Papa, nan pié boi',	Papa, in the tree,
Moin pa' pe' monté.	I cannot climb.
Papa ou c'é' coulev',	Papa, you are a serpent,
Papa ou c'é' Dagowe.	Papa, you are Dagowe.
Damballa Siligwe, Anvalou,	Damballa Siligwe, Anvalou,
Nous salué ou.	We salute you.
Ça nous dit,	What do you say,
Alada Sisigwe?	Alada Sisigwe?
Papa Damballa moin,	Papa Damballa mine,
Signalé nous,	Show us,
Signalé nous Dahomey.	Show us Dahomey.
Nous acé! Nous acé!	We are here! We are here!
Papa Ogun qui met' pié	Papa Ogun who enters
Nan humfort.	The *humfort*
Ago, ago-e!	*Ago, ago-e!*
Kadia Bosu,	Kadia Bosu,
Nous acé,	We are here,
Kadia Bosu.	Kadia Bosu.

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These songs failed to bring the gods, and the mother of the girl who had been possessed was sternly commanded to take her up the hill to the house and dress her in clean dry clothes. Before she could return, another young woman who, it was later learned, was a member of the family from the region of Grand Bois, some distance away, came running down the hill possessed by Damballa. Crying out for more room, she ordered those sitting near the *trône* to move on as she roughly pulled others toward her. Now the *loa* came rapidly, with six or seven immediate possessions; and even one reluctant girl who stood by nervously, hesitating to soil the fresh white dress trimmed in blue which she, like the other women of the family, was wearing, was soon " mounted " by her *loa.*

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Once again the *hungan* made *verver* and, as he did so, the woman possessed by Damballa, leaping across the brook, climbed into a calabash tree, holding to the near-by palm fronds for support as she shook the tree to punctuate her shouted directions and demands. As she climbed higher and higher, the *hungan* pleaded: "Go no further, Papa. Climb no further," but to no avail. By this time it was after four o'clock, and since this day the rains did not delay, the *hungan* entreated her to descend from the tree, to permit him and the others assembled there to go up the hill out of the downpour. Wooing the "*loa*" with song, he urged:

Verver ci mè' a tè,	Here is *verver* on the ground,
Pinga cé'émonie moin,	Take heed of my ceremony,
Shango, ago-é!	Shango, *ago-é!*

While he sang, he made *verver* about the base of the tree on which the woman was standing and along the bank of the stream. But he still had no success, for she persisted with much violence to recount the wrong that had been done by the family to provoke the anger of the gods—how one member had bargained with a *hungan* to induce him to send evil *loa* to the other members of the family, that they might die and his inheritance might be the greater. Before she would consent to descend, all the sacrifices had to be brought for her inspection, and all those possessed were required to go up the hill and dress in clean clothes. Returning in the rain, the freshly dressed women gathered about the base of the tree, exhibiting the sacrificial animals to the *loa*, the chickens held high in the hands of their donors, and the goats and sheep prominently placed. Slowly, very slowly, as the downpour continued, the woman began to descend, and many times she hesitated, so that it was more than ten minutes before she reached the ground.

But even after she was on the ground and the *hungan* was

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78 79 preparing to seek shelter from the rain, new possessions continued, until, saying: "The *loa* are greater than I am," he went on with the ceremony, singing:

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Ossange Damballa Wedo,	Ossange Damballa Wedo,
Laissé coulé, Ossange-o!	Permit coiling, Ossange!
Ai-bobo!	*Ai-bobo!*
Moin entré,	I enter,
M'ap salué loa.	I salute the *loa.*
Ogun, Ogun Achade,	Ogun, Ogun Ashade,
O, Ogun Achade,	O, Ogun Ashade,
Hier soir Ogun fai' yun rêve'-o	Last night Ogun dreamed a dream-o
Rêve' li tourné lègèdé.	Dreamed he turned a spy.

A woman became possessed by Damballa, as did the young man who had "had" Gede the preceding night of the ceremony; the woman was in a gay mood, going about smiling and laughing, while the man threw himself in the water and rolled like a snake. And since the *loa* were coming so strongly, the *hungan* began the ceremony of washing and presenting the sacrificial animals, which this time included two white male goats, one very large and one smaller, a white sheep, and six or seven fowls of various colors. The presentation made, the entire group marched singing up the path to the houses, the flag-bearers saluting with their banners the woman so happy in her possession.

[346] As the procession came up the hill, it passed a newly built small house, intended to serve as the family place of worship for the *loa* now introduced into the habitation, and a framework of brush, or *tonnelle,* that had been erected as a shelter under which the postponed *vodun* dance was to have taken place. Without pausing, they proceeded slowly to the gate-

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way, where a ceremony was held for Legba, the guardian of entrances, that he might permit the other *loa* to pass.

At the direction of the *hungan*, the bars of the gateway were let down as prayers, the Pater Noster and the Ave Maria, were said. Then he sang:

Papa Legba,	Papa Legba,
Fé ou gagné patience	Have patience
Pou' ou service.	At your *service.*
Ago, ago-é!	*Ago, ago-é!*
Papa Legba,	Papa Legba,
Sorti lan Guinée,	Come from Guinea,
Pou' nou' passé.	That we may pass.

As this song and others of similar tenor were sung, the man who had been first possessed by Gede, and earlier in the afternoon by Damballa, strode shouting along the path beside the entrance, into the near-by fire, which was made the hotter as several men blew on it and poured rum into the flames; he stamped in it until he was seized and calmed. The *hungan* once more began to make *vervet*, this time at the gateway, as he sang:

Papa Legba,	Papa Legba,
Na pé mandé,	We ask you,
Ça wé la?	What do you see there?
Adoré-é-o	We worship, oh,
A-i bobo!	*A-i bobo!*
Papa Legba,	Papa Legba,
Ouvri barrière pou' nou', ago-ye!	Open the gateway for us, *ago-ye!*
Ouvri chemin pou' moin.	Open the path for me.

As he sang, he passed the red and black cock for Legba over the body of the possessed man sitting in a chair, who thereupon resumed his excited movements, reeling along the path

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and from time to time again tramping in the fire, as these songs were heard:

Legba cuiscuignon,
À la longtemps,
Moin pas wé 'ou.

Legba who limps along,
It is a long time
I have not seen you.

Papa Legba, wé!
L'ouvri barrière pou' nous passé.
É-ago-ye!
Legba chita lan barrière
Ba nou' passé.
Ago-ye-é!

Papa Legba, look!
Open the gateway that we may pass.
E-ago-ye!
Legba who sits on the gate
Give us the right to pass.
Ago-ye-é!

The chicken was also passed over other members of the family, but without bringing on any new possessions, and was several times presented on both sides of the entrance-way, wings outstretched, the *hungan* occasionally half-kneeling. Finally stepping inside the entrance, he wrung the neck of the animal, which was destined later to be roasted and to hang for several days over the gateway. While the *loa* Legba was dancing in the fire, Gran' Erzilie " came to the head " of a woman who, after violent possession and a great deal of pacing back and forth in company with " Legba," went down on her knees. Still another woman became possessed, by Damballa, and rolled in the mud. Another procession, for the return to the *tonnelle,* was formed as a lilting song was sung, with everyone dancing to it. " Legba," walking backwards, led the way, calling out: " This way, Papa, come this way." The one possessed by Gran' Erzilie followed on her knees, while, some distance behind, " Damballa " rolled from side to side as she moved her body face-downward along the path. After a few moments the woman on her knees began to beat the ground rhythmically as she proceeded, and as " Damballa " caught up with her, she beat this rhythm on the thighs and buttocks

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796 535 men and women exchange gossip and sit about, joining in the songs or merely observing the proceedings; while the young people form part of the singing, dancing circle that revolves almost without pause about the central post of the *tonnelle*, the shelter where the festivities are held.

796 To speak of discipline in connection with these dances is to evoke new and astonishing images for readers familiar with the more popular literature on Haiti. It is admittedly true that as one first witnesses a *vodun* dance, one's reaction is that this is a performance governed solely by the dictates of individual possession. These ceremonies are usually held at night, deep in the bush, lighted only by a small, smoking oil lamp and by the candles fastened to the pegs of the drums, while the participants dress in anything but their best clothing, and in their belts the men carry the machetes always worn by the Haitian peasant. Add to this the effect of the unceasing rhythms of the drumming, the blanket of sound from the unison singing of the participants, the violence of the possessions, and it is not strange that the untrained observer tends to assess what he sees in almost any terms but those of the underlying discipline that defines all activity in the worship of the gods. A release of psychic tension is undoubtedly afforded those who become possessed, and this is also experienced to a lesser degree by all those in attendance. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized, despite so much that has been written to the contrary, that this form of worship of the *loa* is neither unrestrained hysteria nor drunken orgiastic satisfaction of the sex drive. The behavior of the participants, in terms of the accepted patterns of European and American religious decorum, often seems uncouth, vigorous, violent, and even dangerous, when it is merely the expression of a different tradition. And as for the orgiastic aspects of these rites, Haitians have ample opportunity to satisfy their sexual impulses elsewhere, without making this a basic and constant element in the worship of their gods.

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796 *Vodun* dances, in Mirebalais as elsewhere, take place on

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skin, are played in batteries of three, the largest being called *manman*,[3] the middle the *seconde*, and the smallest the *bula*.[4] To be used in dances, the drums, like the *loa* of the worshippers, must be "baptized," as will be seen when an account of their making and consecration is given in a later chapter. The iron, or *ogan*, usually consists of the blade of a hoe struck by a large spike, and the rattle, *açon*, in the form most often encountered, is a rounded calabash, containing seeds or pebbles. The iron and the rattles set the basic, steady beat about which the complex drum rhythms play. The smallest drum first takes the time after the iron and the rattles have begun, the notes being played with an accessory figure by means of two thin sticks. The medium-sized drum is next heard, while the *manman*, ritually the most important of the three, comes in last. The *seconde* also has two sticks, one short, thick, and straight, the other a small bow, which gives an added resilience to the notes of the drums' subsidiary rhythms. In playing the great drum, the single crooked stick, called a *baguette*, is held in the right hand, while the left strikes the drumhead with heel or fingers according to the quality of tone desired. The drumstick itself is wielded either against the skin head or against its wooden side, thus permitting a further variation in tone.

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When "salutes" to the gods are called for by the drums, it is the voice of the *manman* that signals the sweeping circular movements of the dancers, dictating with its beat the dips and semi-prostrations of this figure in the ritual dancing, called *asagwe*. The drum rhythms are always distinctive for each type of *loa*, and every devotee knows the rhythms which call his god.

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The drums and iron are the focus of all activity of the dance, especially since those who are possessed dance facing the drums, in whose beat is heard the voice of the gods. Hence the spectators cluster most closely about them, for anything of significance which happens must happen here. The players of the rattles — it is but rarely that more than one rattle is not

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employed — do not remain with the drummers. These instruments are ordinarily in the hands of *hunsi*, who join the massed ring of dancers that constantly circles about the center pole. These dancers are not under possession, but are merely enjoying the evening or participating in the social aspect of the dance preparatory to becoming possessed. The rattle is held high above the heads of the dancers, and its sharp, steady notes are produced by quick, short, measured movements of the wrist. The end of a song, which sometimes does not come until fifteen or twenty minutes after its initial statement, is usually marked by a continuous shaking of a rattle, a process which effectually breaks the rhythm and makes it possible to begin a new song. The player of the rattle is an outstanding singer, who usually initiates the fresh refrain and continues to sing its repetitions as soloist in the alternation of solo and chorus which marks Haitian *vodun* singing as it marks most West African and New World Negro religious music.

When a possession occurs, the songs for the deity who has "arrived" are taken up as the drums play the rhythm of the god. As his possession comes on, the devotee falls to the ground, rolling before the drums, or staggers blindly about the dancing-space, or otherwise follows the characteristic behavior attributed to his god. After a time he begins to dance, whereupon a *hunsi* or the *hungan*, taking a calabash of water in one hand and a lighted candle in the other, dances opposite him, saluting the god as he performs his every movement in reverse; if he turns clockwise, the one dancing with him turns counter-clockwise; if he moves to the right, the other moves to the left. Except when executing these turns, the functionary of the cult never takes his eyes from the eyes of the possessed person, almost, as it were, hypnotizing him to help him come to himself. Eventually the possessed one recovers sufficiently to take the candle and the calabash of water in his own hands. Often spilling water as he moves, he makes his way to the central pole, pouring an offering and making the sign of the cross with the candle before it.

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pressed with the temerity of those who danced in the fire for Legba.

At a certain dance, however, he volunteered to help in a small way in promoting the activities of the evening, such as serving *clairin* to the drummers, while he himself danced the social dance about the central post of the *tonnelle*. As the tempo of the dance heightened, he became more deeply imbued with the spirit of the occasion and shouted: "If the *loa* comes to me, I will accept it!" as he plunged again into the circle of dancers. When the drums sounded the salute to the gods, he would awkwardly execute the accompanying backward turning movement of the figure.

After a time he left the *tonnelle*, but before many moments had elapsed a commotion was heard at the near-by *barrière*, where he was reeling in the first stage of possession, just inside the gate, while a fully possessed woman in a figured dress stalked back and forth. An *adjanikon*, with candle and calabash of water, was trying to "settle" his possession, but he fell to the ground and rolled on his back, lying prostrate with legs and arms outstretched and twitching. The *adjanikon*, putting aside the candle and water, lifted his limp body to its feet and then slowly, according to the accepted pattern, holding him upright, swayed with him in time to the song that all twelve or fifteen persons present were by now singing, until, staggering, the possessed man was able to support himself:

Damballa-o, Damballa-e,	Damballa-o, Damballa-e,
Damballa-o, Damballa	Damballa-o, Damballa
Wedo,	Wedo,
'Gadé ça ou fait' moin.	See what you have done to me.

Steadily fixing his eyes on the possessed one, the *adjanikon* now danced with him, turning always in the opposite direction as he offered him the candle and the water, which, how-

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796 ever, the man was not yet able to hold. Moving backwards
794 toward the *maison de servitude*, all the spectators continued
787 to sing the song of Damballa, while the man to whom the god
159 had come half-danced and was half-carried up the path to the *tonnelle* and taken into the family house of worship.

[788] When he had sufficiently recovered to be able to hold the candle and the water, he poured the water and unsteadily bowed three times in the accepted manner before the *couvert sec* to the Rada gods. He now was enough in control of himself to emerge, and, with the *adjanikon* dancing before him with water and a candle, he once again came into the *tonnelle*, before the drums. As he appeared, the drummers stopped the Ogun rhythm they had been sounding, and in an intense silence all waited for the god to announce himself. Half on his
● [533] knees before the drums, the one possessed began to sing in a
[539] cracked voice:

Damballa Wedo,	Damballa Wedo,
Papa m' c'est coulev'-o,	Papa, I am a serpent-o,
Na poi' bois	There is no tree
Moin pa' li monté.	I cannot climb.

With this initial statement, the Damballa rhythm rolled from the drums, as all echoed the song in chorused response, while the possessed figure, in strict conformity to the pattern, first poured water at the central post and then consecutively before the iron and each of the drums. Returning to the central post, he whirled about it, almost but never quite falling, until he could dance before the drums, awkwardly but acceptably, before he disappeared to rest in a near-by house.

796 The explanation offered by this man of the manner in
787 which he became possessed, and his varying attitudes toward
159 his possession, are revealing. On several previous occasions
793 the *hungan* who officiated at the dance had noticed that he was attending *vodun* rites and had joked with him about his interest in them. Once at an earlier dance this *hungan* had

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796 tablishment of the family *maison de servitude*, a special ritual
[782] for Legba at the *barrière* was required. The one who took charge threw some rum on the *boucan* that had been made for Legba. Taking a candle, he struck the drums with it; then described *vervet* and placed an egg on the white flour he piled
796 just inside the *barrière*. The rite proceeded no farther, how-
578 ever, for with the appearance of the head of the family, accompanied by his wife and son, who was the young man who had been possessed by Gede the first night of the *service*, a discussion arose which soon developed into a quarrel, because the family head felt that he had not been notified of this dance in the manner due his position. Finally with the cry: "If anything happens to the family because of this, I am not responsible," he departed in a rage. This was regarded as serious, because should a dance which ended an important rite be held with some of the family absent, the gods might be angered and serious consequences might follow. The woman, who had been instrumental in seeing that the *service* was given and had cared for most of the preparations, bravely decided to continue with the ritual, however, and the drumming was resumed.

796 Alcohol and flour were thereupon poured on the drum-
● 533 heads, while a number of songs were sung by all present:

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Bonjou' manman, bonjou' papa,	Good-day, mamma, good-day, papa,
Ma p' mandé coumen nou' yè	I ask how are you.
Lan Guinée gangnin dent'.	In Guinea there are teeth.
Moin entré, moin entré,	I entered, I entered,
Ou pas salué moin.	You did not greet me.
Agoue-e, hunto	Agowe, hunto (spirit in the drum)
Agasu-e	Agasu-e
Agoué-e hunto, e-o.	Agowe hunto, e-o.

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Jean Pétro,	Jean Pétro,
Depuis moin sorti la ville	Since I left town
Moin apé cassé pié moin.	I have broken my foot.
Ça qui fait petit moun fronté.	That is what makes the children impertinent.
Yawé-é-é	Yawé-é-é,
Gedenibo Mazaca	Gedenibo Mazaca,
M'apé rhélé Saints forts	I call the strong saints,
Yawé-é	Yawé-é-é,
Saints forts-é-é	Strong gods-é-é.
P'ti Garçon Lemba,	Little boy Lemba,
P'ti' pilon ça,	A small pestle he.
Na pilé yo, Lemba-o.	Crush them, Lemba-o.

Finally the instruments were lifted over the *barrière*, the *ogan* and rattles first, then the drums in order from smallest to largest, followed by the spectators. Ahead of the procession were *hunsi* with flags, and all continued singing until the *maison de servitude* and the *tonnelle* used during the *service* were reached.

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The drums were carried about the house three times in procession before being taken inside. There, facing the place where the food had been offered — for the house was as yet quite bare, with no suggestion of an altar — the drums were beaten and songs sung to the Rada gods whose sanctuary this was. Though at the moment none of the good drummers had arrived, the drums were placed in line with the north end of the house, and the drumming for the dance commenced. Dancing began about the center pole, but no possessions occurred until shortly after eight o'clock. By that time better drummers had come, and the crowd had so increased that the drums were moved to accommodate those dancing, the drummers now having their backs to the front wall of the sacred house. A candle was attached to a peg of each drum, which,

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Moin rhelé Aizan,	I call Aizan,
Moin rhelé Sobo, St. Jo, Dokwe Agwe,	I call Sobo, St. Joseph, Dokwe Agwe,
Moin rhelé Papa Gede,	I call Papa Gede,
Moin rhelé toutes mystères.	I call all the gods.

When he had ended his song a number of the "salutes" were played on the drums, to which all danced backward in circles, ending the figure in bows before the drums, which were rolling out the call. In the course of the evening a large number of gods were summoned, but, as would be expected, only the *loa* of the family came to this ceremony. Possessions were observed for Legba, Damballa, Ogun Balandjo, Ogun Galloné, Ogun Ferraille, Gede, and Kadya Bosu. St. John, Ossange, Aizan, Ashadé Bokor, Gran' Bosu, Magie, Jean Pétro, Congo, Guinée, Sobo, Bade, and Agwe Woyo, were the *loa* who refused their summons. Though no deity held the center of the stage for too long a time, the evening was notable because it was marked by an unusually large number of Ogun and Damballa possessions, which seemed constantly to alternate. Damballa being the stronger *loa*, his appearance when Ogun was present necessitated the retirement of the latter; but since the possession of Ogun by one woman was particularly persistent, this god returned again and again. As at a number of dances, the *haut chant* for Ogun Galloné, the French marching-song that salutes the "general," was among the songs heard, when those possessed by the god skipped from one end of the *tonnelle* to the other before the drums.

One particularly striking Damballa possession came on suddenly. As a tall, strong man was seized by the god, he gave a great shout and grasped the beams of the *tonnelle*, disappearing upward through the thatch. For a moment it did not seem that he had climbed on the roof of the *tonnelle*, until a head and arms which appeared between the palm fronds showed he

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cal, rapid, continuous jumping, with the body held rigid. As he bobbed up and down, holding his candle under his chin so that the light distorted his features and emphasized the vacant stare in his eyes, he monotonously repeated the sharp sounds of his god: "*Ke-ke-ke-ke-ke-ke-ke!*" or "*Hoi! Hoi! Hoi!*" Standing before some, he would greet them by taking their crossed hands in his strong grip and bringing them down in a single movement that shook the entire body. Once he removed the red kerchief he wore, extending it as an indication he wished gifts of money; he used it to wipe the perspiration from the faces of others; while he would merely run his hands through the hair of still others.[4]

As daybreak neared, the crowd thinned, so that by half past five few of the good drummers or important men remained. Persons who had been sleeping roused themselves, and there was a general exodus. Most of those who had been at the dance did not go to sleep, however, for early Sunday morning mass an hour later found them at the church saying their prayers and listening to the sermon of the priest.

In contrast, another dance visited was noteworthy for its many and varied possessions. It was held at the habitation of one of the fathers-in-law of a *houngan*, and began somewhat later, the drums not arriving until almost eight o'clock. Only a minor ceremony was necessary to bring them through this gateway. The host three times poured water inside the gate, while three men played on the drums and a fourth tapped the *ogan* for a moment. The proceedings began when an elderly *hounsi* summoned Legba, invoking in her song Siligbo Vavon, Dahomey, Ogun, Bade, and "all *loa*." The *houngan* who was host himself arrived at nine o'clock, and the excellence of his drumming caused one possession to follow another with great rapidity. The dance was a large one, and by midnight there were at least two hundred persons in attendance, while at one time fifty or more were dancing about the central post and as many as seven or eight were possessed at once.

1: Herskovits E-4, 8 (1836) 1837 SV3 Haiti SV3 Mirebalais

Preferably, these cult objects are made of pottery, joined by a ligature in twos or threes, as required. The plates rest in a box or on a small table which stands in a corner of an inner room of the house. If the family worshipping the twins is a poor one, joined calabashes or wooden plates are acceptable, and such are found more often in the valley of Mirebalais than pottery plates. The "altar" made by the plates is completed by an *image*—a chromolithograph—of the twin saints, Cosmas and Damien, placed on the wall above them.

The principal rite of the twin cult is the *manjé marassa*. A minor ceremony, if the family has living twins or twins recently dead, it is held, as has already been said, at Christmas and at harvest time; otherwise only at Christmas. Yams and salt fish are separately cooked, and a dish of beans mixed with olive oil is provided. In the morning this food is taken to a closed room, where it is deposited both in the *marassa* plates and in ordinary containers placed for those who attend the rite. As the offering is made, songs such as the following are sung:

Marassa, m'a pé mandé,	Spirit of twins, I ask,
Ça wé la si 'ou content?	Are you contents with what you see there?
Ago-é-é.	*Ago-é-é.*
Adoré nan pié Dumballa,	Worship at the tree of Dumballa,
Ago-é-é.	*Ago-é-é.*
Marassa bois,	Twins of the forest,
Marassa carrefour,	Twins of the crossroad,
M'a pé mandé,	I ask,
Ça wé la si 'ou content?	Are you contents with what you see there?
Adoré nan pié kumfort,	Worship at the *kumfort*,
Aouré-é, ago!	Care for us, ago!
Marassa dé, trois, quatre,	Twins two, three, four,

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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M'a pé mandé, I ask,
Ça wé la si 'ou content? Are you content with what you see there?

The food is eaten the same afternoon. If the twins are actually alive, everything they wear must be new and they must have identical clothes. At the sacrifice of the January harvest, native rice, cakes, okra, bananas, and one, two, or three chickens, designated by the twins themselves, are offered. The food is put in place, and as songs are sung it is left until the following day, when it is eaten. The worship of twins differs markedly in various parts of Haiti. In Leogane, for example, some have such a ceremony only at harvest time, and have a greater *mangé marassa* every five years, when a goat and a chicken are killed and offered with the usual non-animal foods.

Twins stand in a peculiarly intimate relation to each other, as might be expected from the traditional African belief that twins share a single soul, which, as far as could be determined, only survives in attitude in Mirebalais. Should one die, the living twin must put aside a bit of all food he eats, or a small part of any gift given him, for the other. If the twins are both girls, the attempt is usually made to have them betrothed and married at about the same time. If the female twin of a pair is married, she must give a present to her twin brother, and similarly her husband sees to it that his wife's male twin also receives a substantial gift from him as a peace offering, for it is dangerous to wait until the other decides on some overt mischief. The perplexing factor in dealing with twins is that they themselves often do not consciously will the trouble they bring. For example, should the twin of a married woman not feel friendly toward his sister's husband, though he might make a conscious effort to overcome this dislike, his spirit might proceed to use its full power to harass the man in such a way as to trouble the relationship of the couple.

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1936) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

764 placed in the coffin, which must always be used for burial. Even if a person is poor, "he can always borrow a plank from a neighbor, for people are charitable in matters of death," or, if a family cannot immediately afford to have carpenters make the coffin, they are paid later, a few gourdes at a time. This [967] also holds for the professional bather of corpses, who receives three to five gourdes in the countryside, fifteen gourdes in Mirebalais, and, it is said, perhaps fifty in Port-au-Prince. A pig or a goat is killed to feed those who dig the grave and carry the coffin, "so they can do their work well." Otherwise these men receive no payment, for "people do such things for each other."

The wake,[6] which takes place on the night of death, is one of the most important ceremonies in the cycle of rites for the [966 851] dead. Wakes are held for all dead, even for very young children if they have been baptized, though if a baby dies before baptism, it is buried without ceremony in a little box in the courtyard of the habitation. During the wake the body lies in the second room of the house, the long white candle used at the deceased's first communion standing lighted at his feet. If the dead was not a communicant, newly bought candles are placed at his head and feet. The wife and children either stay with the corpse or are near by with friends. The one who bathed the corpse remains constantly at its side as the members of the family come and go, since the body must never remain alone. Wailing goes on all night, and as more relatives arrive, those already there echo their cries.

On a table in another room a white cloth is spread, and a crucifix, images of the saints, flowers, lighted candles, and a lamp of oil are placed on it. The singers bring their song [533] books, since the canticles of the Church are almost the only songs heard. At times songs are specially composed for the occasion, but these always concern themselves with death. Those who stand before the table, principally women, lead SV3 the singing, the others acting as a chorus. People come and go

J: Herskovits E-4,6 (1936) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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and, wearying of the singing, join the group outside the house, where those playing games and the story-tellers are gathered. One popular game is "forfeits," and a forfeit, if reclaimed by a girl, requires the singing of a *chanson de romance*, or if by a man, calls for the recitation of a poem or a humorous folk-tale. Before a forfeit is returned, all sing to a hand-clapping accompaniment:

C'est bien bon,	It is very good,
C'est bien bon,	It is very good,
Ah!	Ah!

Card-games, such as *mariai* (marriage), *trois-sept*, and *besique*, are also played. All these games are entered into with zest, for an important purpose in holding the wake is to amuse the dead, whose body lies near by, and thus send him away in good humor. When drinks are passed, the recipients must make three libations before drinking, one explanation holding that this is in accordance with the formula Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, another that the offering is for the *loa*, the dead, and the *mystère*. At about five o'clock in the morning the *angelus* closes the wake, after which most of those present leave, and only close friends and relatives remain to help with preparations for the funeral. This must take place the day following death, not only because of a legal requirement, but because of the fact that were a body to remain unburied for two nights, the expense of two wakes would have to be met. Before the ceremony of burial takes place, small children are often passed over the coffin three times, in leave-taking, that the spirit of the dead may not return for them.

The funeral itself is held in accordance with the rites of the Church, the difference between funerals consisting principally in the elaborateness of the ritual and the length of time the church bells are tolled, which in turn is determined by the ability of the family of the dead to meet the varying fees. Thus at the funeral of the mother of the *député* from Mire-

L: Herskovits E-4,6 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

always takes place on a Sunday. The prayers of the novena, whatever week-day they may begin, are recited either by the priest, if in town, or by a *prêt' savanne*. The family and a few friends, who gather to hear the prayers and to sing hymns, take their places about a table covered with a white cloth, on which are placed *images* of the saints, a crucifix, two candles which must burn for the nine days, and two bouquets of flowers. A lamp of oil in a glass with a floating wick must also burn day and night. Each session of the novena lasts some two hours, and no refreshments are served those who attend.

On the day of the *dernière prière* those invited come to help cover the walls of the room with white sheets — sometimes the ceiling is also covered — and hang white curtains over doors and windows. Wreaths are placed on the table and attached to the sheets on the walls, and *images* of the saints are pinned to the white table-cloth as it hangs down. Liquor, cakes, *kola*, *clairin* and other refreshments are made ready, according to the family means, these being held so essential that if the family lacks the funds at the moment to provide them, the novena may be stopped on the eighth day, and the *dernière prière* postponed for a month or even two. The same type of song is sung at this rite as at wakes, and the mourners wail once again, though not so loudly as just after the occurrence of death. At about eleven o'clock, after having recited the last prayer of the novena, a *libera* is sung to "drive the dead from the house," since now they are through with him — followed by an *adoration* for the *prêt' savanne*. Since, unlike the custom at *vodun* ceremonies, these coins are his entire fee for the novena as well as for this evening's ceremony, he sees to it that the song which marks it continues until all members of the family have donated a sum that he regards adequate. The *adoration* over, the refreshments are passed, so that the *dernière prière* most often ends at midnight, though those in attendance sometimes remain until morning, playing games, telling stories, and singing canticles as at wakes.

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1936) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

with the words: "Tell it what you have to say. Tell it that you are passing on to it all your pain, everything." When she had finished, the *mambu* once again took the chick, holding its head as she described three crosses on the ground with its beak. She now put some of the earth in which she had made the crosses into a white dish, returning the chick to the woman and telling her to speak to it again, and this time to expectorate three times into its open beak as she finished. The *mambu*, holding the fowl in one hand, thereupon poured some of the mixture from the bottle, and some *clairin*, in the plate that contained the earth, lighting the *clairin* with her free hand and directing the patient to rub her nipples with it. Then she returned the bottle to the pregnant woman, telling her to recount her need to it once more, and then to cork it.

The *mambu* next chewed some of the soup and rubbed it over the cork to "seal" the bottle, saying: "When you send a letter through the mail, you seal it," and instructed the pregnant woman to place the bottle in her house and see to it that it was not uncorked, for in it was contained her life and the life of her child. "Open it before delivery and pass its contents over your abdomen." A cord was put about the waist of the woman and tied tightly, not to be untied until the growing child in her womb should cause it to break of itself. While the *garde* was being made the *mambu* sang this song:

M' pas 'ti bête,	I am not a little animal,
M' pas 'ti cochon,	I am not a little pig,
Pou' on cové,	That one can confine me,
Pou' on marré moin.	That one can tie me up.
Ça qui fait bien,	He who does good,
Cé bien li wé;	Good he will see;
Ça qui fait mal,	He who does evil,
Cé mal li wé.	Evil he will see.
Côté marré corde moin,	Where I tie my cord,
Yo pasa la qui li.	They are stronger than it [the evil?].

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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the cord once over the center, and then at right angles so as to form a cross, crying: *"A-i bobo!"* To hold the cloth in place, he continued to pass the thread about the ball of earth again and again, though according to no special design after the first right angle had been made. As he did this, he sang:

Garde la monté.	This *garde* is fashioned.
Dié nou e-e na coffré yo-o	O God, close them-o.
Moin dit garde la monté.	I say this *garde* is fashioned.
Dié nou e-e na coffré yo-o	O God, close them.
Garde-e, na coffré yo.	*Garde-e*, close them.
Calefou', cé nou minmé,	Crossroads, it is we who are here,
Nou Pemba pa joué.	Pemba, do not play.
Ça nou minmé.	It is we who are here.
Loa Pemba, joué na joué,	*Loa Pemba*, playing he plays,
Magie loa,	*Loa* of magic,
Magie Calfou',	Magic of the Crossroads,
Ça nou minmé.	It is we who are here.

His singing was interrupted by this invocation:

Au nom de Dieu,	In the name of God,
Au nom de Sainte Vierge,	In the name of the Holy Virgin,
Au nom de St. Louis,	In the name of St. Louis,
Au nom de Marasa,	In the name of the Twins,
Voici poin' garde pou' épargné malin esprits marché dans la nuit.	Here is a charm to foil the evil spirits who walk by night.
Au nom de Saints du Ciél,	In the name of the Saints of the Sky,
Au nom de Saints de Tè',	In the name of the Saints of the Earth,

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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Au nom de Saints de la Lune,	In the name of the Saints of the Moon,
Au nom de Saints des Étoiles,	In the name of the Saints of the Stars,
Au nom de Saint de Vent,	In the name of the Saint of the Wind,
Au nom de Saint de Tempête,	In the name of the Saint of the Tempest,
Voici yun garde protection pou' marché dans la nuit,	See, here is a *garde* which gives protection as one walks at night,
Pou' Malt' Calefu'.	For the Master of the Crossroads.

(533) The entwining of the *garde* ended with this song:

Zoumba-é, ai papa, ai manman,	*Zumba-é, ai* father, *ai* mother,
Calefu' barré yo,	The Crossroads bars them,
Cimitière barré yo,	The Cemetery bars them,
Moin monté garde moin,	I fashion my *garde,*
Ai manman, ai papa,	*Ai* mother, *ai* father,
Zoumba-é-é.	*Zumba-é-é.*

789 With the specially treated earth from the crossroads now safely enclosed in its red cotton, the officiant placed it in a white plate and made *verver* about it, using cinders which are termed *farine Guinée,* "the flour of Guinea," and lighted two bits of red candle. The *verver* circled the plate, and also described two long straight lines which crossed at right angles at the center of the circle, each being terminated by a candle — two large and two small. On the floor, near one of the large candles, the seven coppers were placed, and four small piles of cinders were heaped inside the circle, in the following manner:

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

789 making this *garde*. I have not obligated anyone else in any way."

789 539 He now poured *clairin* on the plate, lighted it, and stepped five times over the fire, twice turning the *garde* about in the flame, rubbing his face, hands, and head with the burning liquid, as he pronounced the following invocation:

Au nom de Malt' Grand Bois,	In the name of the Master of the Great Forest,
Qui soldat Malt' Carrefour,	Who is a soldier of the Master of the Crossroads,
Au nom Malt' Cimitière,	In the name of Malolu, of the Cemetery,
Au nom de Malolu,	In the name of Malolu,
Au nom de Kadia-Bosu,	In the name of Kadia-Bosu,
Qui soldat Malt' Carrefour nan toute pays,	Who is the soldier of the Master of the Crossroads in all countries,
Voici un couvert qui preparé ce soir pou' 'ou.	Here is an offering prepared this evening for you.

Extinguishing the *clairin*, he relighted it and repeated what he had just done as another Haitian, a spectator, commented: "If it were not a good *garde*, he would be burned." Finally [533] he sang the following song, which ended this part of the ceremony:

Garde la wé magie carrefou',	This *garde* sees the magic of the Crossroads,
Moin pralé sond'é point.	I am going to test a charm.
Magie cimitière,	Magic of the cemetery,
Moin pralé sond'é point.	I am going to test a charm.

789 The officiant, gathering up the food, the plate, the candles, and the remaining half of the red cloth, prepared to go to

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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land, whose bodies are buried in it, and whose spirits watch over it. As has been shown in the discussion of property, land in Haiti is owned privately, and, once title has passed, is subject to no alienation, except at the will of the owner — an attitude also held toward property of other categories, as is evidenced by the fact that most of the possessions of a man, particularly his livestock, are marked for identification, and theft is severely punished. Even the disposal of stray animals whose owners cannot be identified must follow well-defined legal procedure, in accordance with which they are held by the officers of the commune for a stated period of time before being sold at public auction. All marks on these animals are carefully noted in the records, so that title to them may be duly established.

In the organization of production and distribution an African mold, if not full content, predominates. The co-operative work-system, which is so important in maintaining agricultural production, is directly related to comparable groupings of West Africa, of which a distinctive form is the *dokpwe* of Dahomey, described when the African origins of Haitian culture were examined. The *combite*, as an instrument of co-operative labor and mutual self-help, with its tradition of giving no pecuniary reward for work done, but of making the feast which comes at the end of the day's labor adequate return — all these represent pure retentions of African practice. Even more striking is the carry-over in the attitudes which go with these outer forms — the manner in which the participants look forward with pleasant anticipation to taking part in *combites*, the enjoyment which they derive from their group work, and the verve with which the work is done are clear expressions of these attitudes. The role of the *combite*-song in exercising social control and enforcing conformity to local custom is entirely African, as is its function in stimulating work by setting a rhythm for it.

African, too, is the institution of the market, though in this

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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178 other African traits, which, though essentially utilitarian in Africa, also allow play for the æsthetic impulse, have been
325 326 lost as well. Ironworking is absent not only because the necessary deposits of iron ore are lacking, but because the technique of shaping the metal into various forms, which in Africa is in the hands of specialists, was apparently suppressed in the time
286 178 285 of slavery. No native cloth is woven. Basketry has survived, but whereas in Africa designs of no small artistic merit are achieved in this medium, it is markedly utilitarian in Haiti. Even from a technical point of view, the basketry forms are of the simplest, the panniers used for transportation of products on mule-back being merely an in-and-out weave, and the plaited strips of which hats and the *macoute*, or carrying basket, are made are of a parallel simplicity.

524 525 178 Few African recreational forms have survived. *Wari*, the draughts-like West African game found today in many parts of the West Indies, is unknown in the interior of Haiti, though it has been introduced into Port-au-Prince, where it is played by longshoremen who have learned it from the sailors of near-by islands. String figures, important in West Africa, are not encountered, and no children's pursuits comparable to the play of young Africans were seen in Mirebalais, if the minor ceremony of marking the loss of childhood teeth be excepted. African types of recreation have in the main given way to cock-fights and card-games, both of which derive their interest from the opportunities they offer for gambling—a fact important in itself, since gambling is not one of the widespread African vices. The most important card-games are *trois-sept*, *marriage*, and *bezique*, and both men and women
541 know them and play them for stakes. Similarly cock-fighting, particularly during the dry season, is a passionate avocation of the men. Large sums are wagered on the results of an encounter, and feeling often runs high.[6]

533 535 The Haitian genius for art and recreation is best embodied in the dance and its accompanying songs and drum rhythms. Virtuosity is attained not only by the dancers, but even more

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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especially by the drummers. Experience among other Caribbean Negro cultures and in Africa itself has failed to reveal greater skill in calling forth intricate rhythms from batteries of drums than can be found at any Haitian religious gathering. The enthusiasm with which a man takes his place at a drum, the manner in which he loses himself in his drumming, the skill with which he maintains the time of his complex beats in common with two other drummers and those who manipulate the rattles and the iron, bespeak long training and a passionate devotion to the art. The same is true of dancing. The best drummer, the finest dancer, hold positions of esteem in the community, and on occasion their fame will go beyond the valley, an occurrence as unusual as it is valued. The excellence of the drumming and dancing and the concomitant artistry in song can be understood when one considers the age at which training is begun in these arts. At Mirebalais an infant of no more than two years has been seen to dance creditably, while a young boy of six gave a demonstration of drumming that spoke eloquently of his promise as a drummer of talent. Before every *vodun* dance the boys take over the drums while the younger girls dance to their rhythms. They are watched with a critical eye by their elders, who from time to time correct them or praise those who do well.

The accompanying musical forms are almost entirely African in their rhythmic structure, but European influence is traceable in their melodic line, which varies from unchanged European folk-melodies to purely African songs. In the use of the falsetto, however, in the statement of a theme by a leader and its repetition by a chorus, and in the countless modulations introduced into the song, the singing is entirely African, as are the postures struck by those singing.

The importance of the dance is apparent from the large range of dances. Of *vodun* dances there are the *avalou*, or *yanvalou*, a word meaning supplication in the speech of Whydah; the specialized steps for the various Rada and Pétro gods; for

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1834) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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for all uses to which those of their type are put. During their making and after their completion they had been sanctified by rites that vividly illustrate the merging of traditions in Haitian religion: by means of offerings to the African gods, and through baptism by the rites of the Church.[3]

The *action de grâce* is another integral part of *vodun* ceremonialism that is essentially Catholic, since its lengthy service is composed entirely of prayers and hymns of the Church. As has been shown, the *action de grâce*, which precedes a *vodun service*, takes place before an "altar" which, important both then and at the later, more African rites, in itself documents in no small measure the combining of Catholicism and *vodun*. One, employed at a *service* not described in the earlier chapters, was covered with a red and white checked table-cloth, on top of which a smaller white cloth was spread.* Pinned to the canopy and to the front of the table-cloth were various chromolithographs of the saints: St. Michael attacking the Devil, Mater Dolorosa, St. James, the Virgin Mary and Jesus (the Assumption), and St. Expelitius. In front of the representation of St. James stood a crucifix with the figure of Jesus, in accordance with the custom of never omitting to have one of these at any *vodun* ceremonial. The table bore many offerings; at the back were four bottles of soft drinks, with cups; while also to be seen were several hard rolls, an ear of corn, a dish containing eggs, and another holding, among other things, rice. One of the containers on the table held holy water, while candles for use both in the *action de grâce* and in the later *vodun* rituals lay beside this. Thus crucifix, candles, pictures of the saints, and holy water were combined in this ceremony with offerings of food and drink to be given the gods that the ancestors had brought from Africa.[4] The songs sung at the voduistic portions of these *services* also reflect the psychological unity of Catholic and African elements in *vodun* worship. One of these declares:

* This altar is shown in the illustration facing p. 192.

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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Je crois en Dieu,	I believe in God,
Oui, Santa Maria.	Yes, St. Mary.
Santa Maria,	St. Mary,
Qui sorte nan Guinée.	Who came from Guinea.
Je crois en Dieu,	I believe in God,
Oui, Santa Maria.	Yes, St. Mary.

Another for the Virgin of Allada, sung in Leogane, is as follows:

Santa Maria la Madaleine,	St. Mary Magdalene
Prié pou' loa yo.	Pray for their *loa.*
O Allada-e,	O Allada-e,
Sonné une sonne pou' moin,	Ring a bell for me,
Pour m'allé.	So I may go.
M'dit, Allada-o,	I say, Allada-o,
Sonné une sonne	Ring a bell
Pou' les pitites nagé.	For the drowned children.

Of these elements, the portraits of the saints, or *images*, offer one of the most vivid instances of the mingling of African and European elements in Haitian belief, for they are the outward symbol of the psychological reconciliation that has been effected between the saints of the Church and the African deities. This is nothing peculiar to Haiti alone. In West Africa, wherever Catholicism has obtained something of a foothold, certain pagan deities are regularly identified with saints of the Church, and the same phenomenon is found in Cuba[8] and Brazil.[9] This identification of saints with the *loa*, whether initiated as a ruse against the detection of African worship or emanating from a reasoned analogy, would seem in Haiti, at least, to act as a device to achieve an adjustment between two conflicting systems by emphasizing the resemblance between Catholic saints and African nature deities. The importance of the *images* as symbolizing the reconcilia-

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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in the Pétro group. The Erzilie gods are put in both categories, while Gran' Siligbo, designated in the first list as Pétro, was assigned to both "companies" by the person who gave the third list, and named as a Rada deity by the one who gave the second. Furthermore, the third list, that of the singer, comprises *loa* whose "names" are undoubtedly the result of the acceptance by this man of certain phrases from his songs as valid designations of gods, especially such names as "Aizan Marché Loko" or "Loko Kisigwé." It is not without interest to speculate on this as a possible mechanism by means of which new names are added to the *vodun* pantheon.

Only one of the lists specifically assigned gods to other than the Rada and Pétro categories. One of these was termed *Guinée* and included the following names of deities:

Kaplaou	Congo
Enwizo	Loa Sinegal
Wangol	Cangaron

The other was the Ibo group, accorded two names, the Loa Mondongue and a *loa* named Ibo Lélé.

More variable, however, than classifications of the *loa* are accounts of attributes and interrelationships, and details of their worship. Yet certain traits and functions of the gods and aspects of their ritual can be set forth. One way in which the Haitians determine such matters is by reference to the songs sung in honor of the gods. Again and again the texts of such songs were cited as authority, suggesting that they are the "holy word" of *vodun* theology and an important device in stabilizing the details of belief. The attributes of the gods which follow are the result of extended discussions with folk who possessed all degrees of knowledge of the details of the cult and who were all active participants in it.

Legba, guardian of the crossroads, the highway, and the *barrière*, the entrance to every house, yard, or garden, is one of the most important *vodun* deities. He is generally conceived

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[General information on Haitian songs will be found in category 116, pp. 137-169. However, these songs are broken up by subject coverage in the text as follows:

songs of complaint, recrimination and gossip -- pp. 137-147
political songs -- pp. 148-162
songs of bravado and boasting -- pp. 163-165
secret society songs -- pp. 167-169.]

[P. vii]
[P. vi is blank]

Preface

Every student of Haitian life is soon impressed by the richness of the materials spread out before him and the necessity of limiting his field of investigation. A study of Haitian religious practices, for example, draws one deeper and deeper into profusion, variation, and contradition. One finds little difficulty in drawing a generalized picture with swift, bold lines; but when he descends into detail he discovers that the bold generalizations of the religious system contain within them many sifting and even warring motifs, and that what in one region is held to be true is not so regarded in another. The gods of *Vodoun* that are revered in one village are given only perfunctory treatment in another. Rites for the dead have a common denominator everywhere in the country, but each community brings to them something of its own or emphasizes traditions that elsewhere are forgotten. So it is also with music and dancing. A traditional drum rhythm may have one name in the north and another in the south, or a certain rhythm may be called by different names. There are diverse opinions about which dances are preferred by certain cities. The meaning of a song can be interpreted differently by different people. It is therefore no wonder that competent works on Haiti do not completely agree with one another in many respects, or that they seem, now and then, to be saying different or even contradictory things. Yet in many instances the seeming inconsistencies are in reality only minor variations within an overall scheme.

The purpose of this book is to present a broad view of certain aspects of Haitian culture and wherever possible to extract some of the flavor of Haitian thinking as well as its sense. It is easy to be fooled in regard to both. I remember seeing an old bearded man in the mountains beyond Furcy walking around his freshly hoed garden breaking a ripe tomato into small juicy bits which he scattered on the ground. It was about as primitive a method of planting as I had ever seen, and I wondered if even

2: Courlander B-S (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

one seed from that tomato would ever take root under the hot sun. Some time later, when I knew this man well, I talked to him about the care with which seeds must be planted if they are to grow properly. I told him how *we* grew *our* tomatoes. He listened carefully, nodding his head. When I had finished he said: "Yes, that must be a good way to do things in your country. But here in this valley God is good. He does not forget his children. From the broken tomato many plants will sprout. When God is good to you, you do not have to count the seeds." I suggested that perhaps one should not waste any of the precious seeds that God had provided; and to this he replied: "How is there waste? My garden is made to flourish by Zaka [the country man's special deity]. Some people give Zaka a feast every year, but between times they forget. Zaka helps me in my work, and I don't forget him. When I break the tomato and put it on the ground that way, it is a little taste for Zaka. Whatever I plant, I give him some. He is good to me, I am good to him."

What I learned from many incidents like this one was that the eye does not always see correctly. The old man was not just planting tomatoes, nor was he performing a conventionalized ritual act. It was a highly personalized act of faith in nature and confidence in the deity who shared his work.

A large part of this book deals with Vodoun, the religious practices based on West African traditions. One soon discovers that the songs and dances of Vodoun ritual are not merely music and motion supplementing and decorating more serious affairs. Virtually every aspect of Vodoun ritual is placative or invocational. The songs that are sung and the dances that are danced are direct supplication of various supernatural forces.

Undoubtedly, a number of principles which are put forward in this study do not apply equally to every region of Haiti; but they are, I think, true in general terms. Not until one has accepted the fact that different explanations exist for given phenomena, that the same rites are performed in different fashion in different places, and that the cult priests themselves do not agree on many details, may one begin to work toward a general view of the Haitian scene.

All of Haitian life is not Vodoun. And there are of course some Haitians who are relatively outside the central circle of its influence. But the inner meanings of Vodoun and its relationship to the total view of life permeate the entire scene. Music, too, binds together practically the entire fabric of Haitian existence. It is essential not only to the cult temple but to countless workaday activities. Agrarian work groups often perform their tasks to the accompaniment of a drum. And in the cult temple, the iron hoe of the fields often serves as a percussion instrument.

The Drum and the Hoe is the result of studies made over a period of

2: Courlander 8-5 (1937-1954) 1960 8V3 Ha21 8V3

approval of the candidate's elevation is needed. He is also regarded as being on more intimate terms with the family ancestors who, likewise, must be in accord with the proceedings. The candidate for the asson is confined within the hounfor for a number of days, during which he takes purification baths and participates in other rituals. The rites that take place during this period are prescribed by the elder priest who has assumed responsibility. When the purification is ended, the candidate emerges into the *peristyle* (roofed court) to participate in the general service, and to undergo further tests.

Present during the ceremonies are all the principal houngans of the region—men who will be friendly associates of the new priest or, possibly, unfriendly competitors. The candidate is tested on his knowledge of how to use the asson and the tiny hand bell, and in the course of the service he is mounted by the loa who is the chief protector of the cult temple. Animals are sacrificed, and all the loa sacred to the hounfor are invoked and asked for their approval and support. But it is not only the loa and the dead who must indicate their approval. The elder houngan polls the hounsi kanzo on whether they will accept their new cult chief and follow him. He also asks the chief drummer, who polls his assistant drummers. It is taken for granted that the decision is in the hands of the hounsi. The consensus is known before the actual service, but the formality of asking the question is observed. Should the hounsi refuse to accept the candidate for the asson, the elevation cannot take place.

The city and the countryside contain many self-styled houngans and hocors who are not recognized as bona fide by the community, regardless of the route by which they claim to have achieved their station. Sometimes they are regarded as *pas fort* (not strong); that is, they do not have profound knowledge and understanding. The Haitian is quick to detect the difference between a houngan who knows and one who does not know. Many are stated to be outright fakes. One man who attempted to hold a service in Port-au-Prince aroused such contempt and disgust that a number of persons who had been drawn by genuine interest walked out with remarks that the man should be punished. In fact, his failure to show any essential qualifications for the houngan's role was commemorated upon in a song of ridicule that made its appearance at a secular dance that same night. The song noted some of the humorous aspects of the service, such as when the "impostor" struck himself vigorously on the head with the flat of a machete to show his "strength" and virtually incapacitated himself for the rest of the evening.

It is easily observed that no two hounfors are exactly alike. They differ

they say, and "rides" them. What the possessed persons do then depends upon the personality and whim of the loa. Generally they take on the special personal characteristics of the loa. Their voices and manners change and their postures and attitudes undergo transfiguration. They may talk about the "island below the water," about community ancestors, about intimate affairs of the community, or about how things are going back in Africa. Sometimes they utter words or phrases recognized as "African language." And on occasion possessed persons talking *language* are said to be speaking Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, or Spanish. At the moment of first impact, when the loa enter their heads, they stagger, jerk, and tremble, often falling on the ground. Then, soon afterward, their behavior begins to move in a groove of conventionalized activity.

Most commonly the loa arrive during religious rituals or dances. They come by way of the *po'teau mitan*, the center pole which supports the roof of the peristyle. It is around this pole that the sacred vévés, or flour drawings, are made. At the foot of the pole sacrifices are offered and libations are poured.

Yet possession may occur anywhere and at any time. The sound of a certain drumbeat may be the signal for it, or a sudden fright, or an emotional crisis, or any situation to which possession has been conditioned. The houngan or the mambo may facilitate possession, control it, and terminate it. The cult priest is acutely sensitive to the conditions favorable to possession. He knows how to heighten emotional tension and how to soften it. A competent houngan "plays" his service as though it were a delicate instrument. He takes everything in, issues instructions to his servitors from time to time, orders the drum tempo increased or diminished, knows how to change pace. Sometimes he hovers in the background unobtrusively, encouraging the singing and dancing like a benevolent father. At other times he comes to the center of the activities and takes command. He becomes the focus of all eyes. His slightest action is watched with intensity. He may take the hand of one of the servitors, pirouette him about, and compel the loa to enter. When the servitor is "mounted," the houngan may conduct him through ritual activity. At the right moment the houngan may help the loa to leave.

The spectators who observe possession in others are usually aware of the identity of the loa who has entered. When the ancient loa Dumballa Wédo comes in, his "horse" falls to the ground, wriggles like a snake, and makes what are considered to be snakelike sounds in his throat. For Dumballa is the venerable deity identified with the rainbow, which in ancient Dahomean lore was thought to be the great serpent come out from the underworld to drink after a rain. When the loa Ogoun Chango enters,

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6. Songs of the Peristyle

The songs that are sung in the peristyle are virtually numberless and have a wide range of themes. In general, they are in the spirit of supplication or placation. Preponderantly they relate in some way to the deities. A *loa* may be described, invoked, or called upon to perform certain deeds. He may be cajoled, joked with, and even criticized. But it is all a family affair. The servitors and the *fidèles* are the *loa*'s "children," his "horses," his "leaves in the woods." The *loa*, the spirits of the dead, and the living members of the cult are all members of the same "nation." Whether supplication or admonition, the songs of the peristyle and the *bounfor* all have an intimate character. The affairs of the *loa* are the affairs of the *société*. What concerns one individual concerns all.

The themes of the songs have to do with the drama of the cult ritual, the coming and going of the deities, sickness and death, the welfare of the dead, and the behavior of the living.

The cult service is a dramatic presentation which synchronizes and brings into sharp focus the heritage of religious and folk beliefs. The songs describe and evaluate what is going on. Sometimes they are cryptic and tangent, but to those participating and those watching they are clear. As the action is usually related and progressive, so are the songs. Each song has its own place and its own meaning. One song is not readily interchangeable with another. Each service has its appropriate *musique*, the *chants* with developing phases of the *bounfor* ritual.

Some of the songs are addressed to the *loa*; others seem to be the words of the *loa* themselves. In many of the songs there is an implicit dialogue between one or more *loa* and the singers. This dialogue is not rendered in a form which is immediately understandable to a stranger. There is a constantly shifting point of view, so that sometimes the words are third-person comments about the *loa* or the situation,

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sometimes they are the words of the deity, sometimes words addressed to the deity. The name of the loa may appear anywhere in the song, as both an invocational word and a rhythmic device, with the result that unless one is aware of the song structure he may lose the sense and intent of the words. In these two lines, for example:

Master Agwé comes from the sea,
My cannon is loaded.

The first line describes what happens, from the standpoint of a third person; the second line is a statement by the loa Agwé. Or, take this single line:

Marie Louise oh, we are mixed up!

Here Marie Louise seems to be the person addressed, but in fact it is Marie Louise who is talking. Again:

I don't see my blood, Master Ogoun!

It is not Ogoun who is addressed; the words are his own.

As in nonreligious songs, there is a pattern stanza which is repeated over and over again. As the song goes on, there may be variations for interest and certain embellishments, but by and large the form remains constant. In religious singing there are relatively few examples of songs which progress from one idea to another. When the theme has been stated, that is the song.

One of the preliminary songs in many ritual services is a greeting to the men and women of the société who are present. It is an ochan, or salute of welcome, and comes before the loa themselves are addressed:

Messieurs-dames bonsoir!	Gentlemen and ladies, good evening!
M'apé mandé nou!	I ask you!
Messieurs-dames bonsoir!	Gentlemen and ladies, good evening!
M'apé mandé nou	I ask you
Qui gens nous yé! [Ex. 41]	What people are we?

The answer to the question is implicit, for they are the people of the société, members of the Arada "nation" or Anago "nation," as the case may be.

In almost any service of the Dahomey "nation" the first supplicatory song is addressed to Legba, the keeper of the gate, the guardian of the crossroads, and the "go-between" who intercedes with other loa in the affairs of men. The first appeal to Legba is to open the gate, over which he is master, so that the voices of supplication may be heard and understood. The open gate also provides access for other loa to the service.

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Attibon Legba ouvri bayè pou' moin ago!
Ou wè Attibon Legba ouvri bayè pou' moin ouvri bayè!
M'apé rentré quand ma tourné,
Ma salué loa yo!

Attibon Legba, open the gate for me, ago!
You see, Attibon Legba, open the gate for me, open the gate!
I will enter when I return,
I salute the loa!

After this appeal, or sometimes while it is being sung, the houngan spills a little water on the earth at the base of the po'teau mitan. It is an inducement for the loa to "enter," for the loa reside "below the water" and their passage into the hounfor is made easier by water. The houngan may spill his water in a long path from the entrance of the peristyle to the po'teau mitan, or extend his pitcher invitingly to the four points of the compass. Then, perhaps, another song is sung to Legba:

Papa Legba nan hounfor moin!
Papa Legba nan hounfor moin!
Papa Legba nan hounfor moin!
Ou même qui porté drapeau,
C'est ou même ka paré soleil pou' loa yo!
Papa Legba, Papa Legba!

Papa Legba is in my hounfor!
Papa Legba is in my hounfor!
Papa Legba is in my hounfor!
You who carry the flag,
It is you who shade the loa from the sun!
Papa Legba, Papa Legba!

As the ritual gets under way, there may be a general song of welcome to all the loa of the cult, such as this one:

Bonjou' oh bonjou' bonjou' bonjou' bonjou'!
Bonjou' oh bonjou' bonjou' bonjou' bonjou'!
Oh bonjou' oh bonjou' loa moin! [Ex. 43]

Good day, oh, good day, good day, good day, good day!
Good day, oh, good day, good day, good day, good day!
Oh, good day, oh, good day my loa!

When the service is well in progress, the songs may describe the qualities of the deities—their character, behavior and needs. If it is Balindjo, for example, the song may advertise that persons with this loa in their heads are immune to poison:

Ogoun Balindjo,
Oh Ogoun eh!

Ogoun Balindjo,
Oh, Ogoun, eh!

Ogoun Balindjo,
Oh Ogoun ah!
C'est pas manger rangé
Pral voyé chwal manjé! [Ex. 44]

Ogoun Balindjo,
Oh, Ogoun, ah!
There is no poisoned food
That will kill my horse!

Ogoun Fai, known also by the Christian name St. Jacques, is the deity of war, and this song describes his courage and valor:

St. Jacques Majeur a voyé dit'm ga'pas dépli!
St. Jacques ah voyé dit'm ga'pas dépli!
St. Jacques Majeur a voyé dit'm ga'pas la-guè!
St. Jacques ah voyé dit'm ga'pas la-guè! [Ex. 45]

Major St. Jacques sent to tell me he is already a man!
St. Jacques, oh, sent to tell me he is already a man!
Major St. Jacques sent to tell me he is a man of war!
St. Jacques, oh, sent to tell me he is a man of war!

Should the service be to the lou Dumballa Wèdo, symbolized as a rainbow and a great serpent, this song might be sung, commenting that he cannot be drowned in the water:

Papa Dumballa ou c'est couleuve ah!
Pouq'ou pas nèyé?
Pouq'ou pas nèyé?
Dumballa pouq'ou pas nèyé nan dlouo? [Ex. 46]

Papa Dumballa you are a snake, ah!
Why don't you drown?
Why don't you drown?
Dumballa, why don't you drown in the water?

[1998] [873] Dumballa, the rainbow, is in fact the source of the water that bubbles from the earth in springs. He is a patron of the spring, and there he often lives in the form of a water snake. In many a houmfor where Dumballa is specially revered there is a *basin*, or pool, dedicated to him. [532] On the wall behind the pool there is usually a painting of Dumballa and Ayida, depicted as great serpents, sometimes with a feathered headdress. The pool is kept filled with fresh water from the spring, and [231] here one or more small snakes—symbols of Dumballa and Ayida—reside:

Ala lou manjé nan dlouo
C'est Dumballa!
Ala lou manjé nan dlouo
C'est Dumballa!
Papa Dumballa c'est ou à dlouo!
Papa Dumballa c'est ou à dlouo!

There is a lou who lives in the water,
It is Dumballa!

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There is a loa who lives in the water,
It is Damballa!
Papa Damballa is the spring!
Papa Damballa is the spring!

Ayida Wèdo, another aspect of Damballa, is also known as a snake and a rainbow. A song describing Ayida's attributes goes:

Ayida c'est serpent-ci!
Ou ap' viré toi rouléwé!
Ayida c'est serpent-ci!
Pas wé n'ap toi rouléwé? [Ex. 47]

Ayida is a rainbow, eh!
You will come in like a snake!
Ayida is a rainbow!
Don't you see I come in as a snake?

Agwé Weyo, one of the major deities of the sea, is believed to be responsible for thunder over the ocean, which is described as the sound of his cannon shooting:

Mèt' Agwé m'ti nan la mer,
Canon'm chargé-li!
Mèt' Agwé m'ti nan la mer,
Canon'm chargé!
Mèt' Agwé m'ti nan la mer,
Canon'm chargé eh!
Canon'm chargé pou'm tiré Mèt' A'Weyo! [Ex. 48]

Master Agwé comes from the sea,
My cannon is loaded!
Master Agwé comes from the sea,
My cannon is loaded!
Master Agwé comes from the sea,
My cannon is loaded, eh!
My cannon is loaded to fire, Master Agwé Weyo!

The loa Kitta, or Simbi Kitta, of the Guinée pantheon is one of the water deities. He is described as coming out of the water dripping wet:

Kitta eh m'ti nan dlowe li tout' mouillé!
Oh Kitta eh m'ti nan dlowe li tout' mouillé!
Oh Kitta m'ti nan dlowe li tout' mouillé!
Oh nan point lwangue pareil Bondieu nan pays-pi! [Ex. 51]

Kitta, eh, comes out of the water, he is all wet!
Oh, Kitta, eh, comes out of the water, he is all wet!
Oh, Kitta comes out of the water, he is all wet!
Oh, there is no lwangue in this country greater than God!

Tijean Pitro of the Pitro "nation" is small, and agile even though he has only one foot. (Some people say that Tijean Pitro has no feet at all.) This somewhat malevolent deity hides in the leaves of the coconut palm, and from there he sometimes preys on passersby, particularly children. Persons possessed by Tijean Pitro may move about as though they have no feet and climb into the highest palm tree.

2: Courlander 8-6 (1927-1968) 1960 SV2 HAR1 SV3

they have no feet and climb into the nearest palm tree. This song comments on Tijean's ability to climb with his single foot. (Haitians do not "shinny" up trees, but walk up, bracing the soles of the feet against the trunk.)

Tijean ou pas gainyain pieds,
Tijean ou pas gainyain pieds,
Comment ou fai monté cocoye?
Lans layé ou Legba, Jean Pêtro,
Lans layé ou!

Tijean, you have no feet,
Tijean, you have no feet,
How do you climb the coconut tree?
By using Legba's gun, Jean Pêtro,
By using the gun!

When the lwa begin to arrive in the hounfor to participate in the ceremonies, there is usually a song taking note of their coming. Sometimes the words describing the action are the deity's own account of what is happening, as in this song to the lwa Sobo:

C'est passé n'ap passé lá!
C'est passé nou passé lá!
Ê, houssi houssie é yo houssain nom moin!
Yo houssain nom moin yo houssain nom moin!
Yo sélé houssi kanzo!
Yo sélé Dahomain!
Yo sélé nowé! [Ex. 50]

I am passing through, I am passing through!
I am passing, I am passing here!
Ê, the houssi houssie call my name!
They are calling for me, they are calling for me!
The houssi kanzo are calling!
Dahomey is calling!
They are calling me!

In another rite one might hear this song about the arrival of the deity Simbo, from the point of view of the servitors rather than of the lwa:

Simbo Kitta vini wé moin, oh!
Oh, Simbo wa vini wé moin lá, oh moins yé! [Ex. 51]

Simbo Kitta comes to see me, oh!
Oh, Simbo will come to see me here, oh mine!

When the deity Bouliche Nago comes in, there is a call for the drums to be played:

Nago 'rivé-é,
Bouliche Nago 'rivé-é!
Nago 'rivé-é,
Bouliche Nago 'rivé-é!
Li lé li tempo batta lá!
Li lé li tempo batta lá!
Nago 'rivé jodi-á oh ezhé! [Ex. 52]

Nago arrives,
Bouliche Nago arrives!
Nago arrives,
Bouliche Nago arrives!
It is time, beat the drums!
It is time, beat the drums!
Nago comes today, oh, ezhé!

3: Courlander 8-6 (1937-1950) 1960 8V3 Haiti 8V3

Sobo, too, demands his drums as he arrives, as well as all the other paraphernalia for his ritual:

Cotè yo cotè yo?	Where are they, where are they?
Sobo mandé houmi 'Linda!	Sobo asks for his Allada houmi!
Cotè yo cotè yo?	Where are they, where are they?
Cotè yo cotè yo?	Where are they, where are they?
Sobo mandé 'tambour' Rada!	Sobo asks for his Arada drums!
Cotè yo cotè yo?	Where are they, where are they?
Cotè yo cotè yo?	Where are they, where are they?
Sobo mandé pouin Allada!	Sobo asks for his Allada magic!
Cotè yo cotè yo? [Ex. 53]	Where are they, where are they?

When more than one loa comes into the service at the same time there is confusion. Each loa is supposed to await his turn, so that the ritual and the dance may be conducted in an orderly way. Sometimes, however, two or more deities come in at once, throwing the orderly process out of gear. This song takes note of the simultaneous arrival of the loa Adja, Loko, Sobo, Sodje, and others.

Adja nan mélé, oh Adja oh!
Adja nan mélé!
Nan mélé Papa Loko, nan mélé jodi-a!

Adja nan mélé, oh Adja oh!
Adja nan mélé!
Nan mélé Sodje zozo nan mélé jodi-a!

Adja nan mélé, oh Adja oh!
Adja nan mélé!
Nan mélé Lòt' ouvè Nèg' Sobo nan mélé jodi-a! [Ex. 54]

Adja we are mixed, oh, Adja, oh!
Adja we are mixed!
We are mixed Papa Loko, we are mixed up today!

Adja we are mixed, oh, Adja, oh!
Adja we are mixed!
We are mixed Sodje, enough, we are mixed up today!

Adja we are mixed, oh, Adja, oh!
Adja we are mixed!
We are mixed all the time, Nèg' Sobo, we are mixed up today!

When the loa come in en masse this way, some are asked to retire so that the service can proceed smoothly. In a similar instance, the deity Maria Louise is willing to withdraw from the scene but demands that a present or sacrifice be given to her first.

2: Courlander 8-5 (1937-1963) 1960 RV3 Ha81 RV3

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Marie Louise oh nou mélé!	Marie Louise, oh, we are mixed up!
Marie Louise oh nou mélé!	Marie Louise, oh, we are mixed up!
Gad yo ou ba mwin pou'm alé?	Where is my gift so that I can go?

Often, when it is time to leave the service, the deity announces through the medium of the song that he has other affairs to attend to elsewhere. Ogoun Achadé, for example, makes a swift departure:

Ogoun volé!	Ogoun flies!
Ansagé	Ansagé
Ogoun volé Achadé!	Ogoun flies Achadé!
Ansago Papa! [Ex. 95]	Ansago Papa!

As the deity Général Briséé departs, he tells his servitors that he is "going to God," and that he turns responsibility for their affairs over to them:

Général Briséé pays yo nan main ou!
Agwé! Agwé!
Général Briséé pays yo nan main ou!
Pays yo nan main
M'pral Bondieu djab ou! [Ex. 96]

General Briséé, the country is in your hands, sir!
Agwé! Agwé!
General Briséé, the country is in your hands, sir!
The country is in your hands,
I am going to God, sir!

The Ion Bumba, in reply to a query, declares that he must go because he has work to do in his fields:

Bumba qui cote pralé?	Bumba, where are you going?
Bumba qui cote pralé?	Bumba, where are you going?
Bumba qui cote pralé?	Bumba, where are you going?
Bumba qui cote pralé?	Bumba, where are you going?
M'planté mangé	I am planting manioc
Planté pwas!	Planting peasers!
Planté joumoum!	Planting pumpkins!
Planté bannan!	Planting plantains!
Wailo Bumba qui cote pralé? [Ex. 97]	Wailo Bumba, where are you going?

The deities Maît' Bois and Maît' Dlesu declare as they depart that they are on their way to Africa, and leave the impression that things are pretty nice over there:

Maît' Dlesu qui sa'ti nan dlesu!	Maît' Dlesu who comes out of the water!
Maît' Bois qui sa'ti nan bois!	Maît' Bois who comes out of the woods!
Nan Guinée plaisi-à belle ou!	In Africa pleasure is beautiful, sir!
A n'allé wé pa! [Ex. 98]	We are going to see!

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As the loa Mambo Ayida of the Guinée pantheon leaves the hounfor to return to Africa, her "children" ask her not to stay there too long. And they ask her to bring back to Haiti with her some good magic for use in the hounfor:

Mambo Ayida *ô!*
Prol nan Guinée-à, pingo ou mèd-à m'kondé!
Si ou jwinn bon ounanga wa pa'sé!
Si ou jwinn bon kwiss wa pa'sé! [Ex. 59]

Mambo Ayida *ô!*
Go to Africa, take care not to stay, I am waiting!
If you find a good ounanga, bring it!
If you find a good kwiss, bring it!

Giving food to the loa is a focal point in religious rituals. Many songs describe the sacrifice, signify that the loa are waiting for their food, or otherwise dramatize this significant activity. In the following song the deity Damballa asks for the goat with which he is to be fed.

Damballa Wédo oh c'est sang-ô!
Damballa mandé the cabrit,
C'est sang li mandé!
Damballa Wédo oh c'est sang-ô!
Damballa mandé the cabrit,
C'est sang li mandé!
Damballa Wédo oh c'est sang li mandé!
Oh sweet! [Ex. 60]

Damballa Wédo, oh, it is blood *ô!*
Damballa asks for the head of the goat,
It is blood he asks for!
Damballa Wédo, oh, it is blood *ô!*
Damballa asks for the head of the goat,
It is blood he asks for!
Damballa Wédo, oh, it is blood he asks for!
Oh, enough!

For Ogoun they sometimes sing:

Papa Ogoun qui gain' yon ounagi
Tout moune pas ounagi lé
Enlé enlé, olé! [Ex. 61]

It is Papa Ogoun who has a feast,
Not everyone may eat it!
Enlé enlé, olé!

But sometimes Ogoun is dissatisfied that there is no feast ready for him, and he complains.

2: Courlander 8-5 (1937-1948) 1960 SV3 Hati SV3

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Ogoun é oh moin blessé! Ogoun é, oh, I am hurt!
Ogoun é oh moin blessé! Ogoun é, oh, I am hurt!
A pas m'blessé Ferci, Now I am hurt, Ferci,
M'pas wé sang moin! I don't see my blood!
M'pas wé sang'm Mait Ogoun, I don't see my blood, Master Ogoun,
Moin pas wé sang moin! I don't see my blood!
M'pas wé sang'm Badagry, I don't see my blood, Badagry
Moin pas wé sang moin lá! [Ex. 62] I don't see my blood here!

The loa Mounlongue, like Damballa, likes goat meat, and it can be cooked in two ways:

Yi yé yé!
Mounlongue oh!
Oh Mounlongue oh yé yé yé!
Mounlongue mangé cabrit bouilli,
Mounlongue mangé cabrit boucané! [Ex. 63]

Yi yé yé!
Mounlongue, oh!
Oh, Mounlongue, oh, yé yé yé!
Mounlongue eats boiled goat,
Mounlongue eats roasted goat!

Or again, the servitors may sing:

Cote passé na ba'ou mangé, oh Ti Mounlongue oh!
Cote passé na ba'ou mangé, Mounlongue oh! [Ex. 64]

Wherever you are, we give you food, oh, Ti Mounlongue there!
Wherever you are, we give you food, Mounlongue there!

[illegible] The loa Adja also has animal sacrifices and special dishes for his mangé, but sometimes he—and the "horses" he mounts—will eat broken glass:

Oh Adja mangé bouteille dirodjaw!
Adja vèvè' vèvè'!
Adja mangé bouteille dirodjaw!
Adja vèvè' vèvè'! [Ex. 65]

Oh, Adja eats the bottom of a bottle!
Adja, oh! eee, oh! eee!
Adja eats the bottom of a bottle!
Adja, oh! eee, oh! eee!

For the loa Lasaman Ibo the proper sacrifice is a rooster, and the deity declares:

Nanchon Ibo m'la mangé grow roq oh nanchon Ibo!
Nanchon Ibo m'la mangé grow roq!
Nanchon Ibo m'la mangé grow roq oh nanchon Ibo!
Wailo wailo wailo! [Ex. 66]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

Ibo nation, I am going to eat a large cock, oh, Ibo nation!
Ibo nation, I am going to eat a large cock!
Ibo nation, I am going to eat a large cock, oh, Ibo nation!
Wanlo wanlo wanlo!

The Ibo service is often a strictly family affair rather than a broad community ritual. The family replies to the Ibo lea in the following song.

La famille vin' payé sang,
Vin' payé sang!
La famille vin' payé sang,
Ibo Lanlé voloutè! [Ex. 41]

The family comes to pay blood,
Comes to pay blood!
The family comes to pay blood,
It is Ibo Lanlé's wish!

The lea Nago frankly tells the people that if they want to come to his house (his shrine, or the hounfor) they will have to pay something for the privilege:

Si nou wè caf'm demeuré,
Si nou wè caf'm demeuré,
Fau'm payé bonbon pou' çal
Anago Nago!
Vin' wè caf'm demeuré! [Ex. 63]

If you see where I live,
If you see where I live,
You have to give cookies for that!
Anago Nago!
Come see where I live!

The "dead" spirit Gòlé Nimbo, the guardian or master of the cemetery, who often engages in bizarre activities which poke fun at the codes of social behavior, is sometimes regarded as a special protector of children. Precisely because he is overlord of all that has to do with the grave, his good will is sought, particularly in behalf of the young; and in many services of the Nago rites his protection is bought by money gifts:

Gòlé main la'gent,
M'apé ba ou la'gent la'gent,
M'apé ba ou la'gent pou' ga'dé nenfanm la yal
M'apé ba ou la'gent pou' ga'dé nenfanm la yal

Gòlé, take the money,
I will give you money, money,
I will give you money to guard the children!
I will give you money to guard the children!

In the course of the ceremonies when, from time to time, the honored lea of the occasion enters into the head of one of the servitors, the houngan will place in the hands of the mounted person a lighted candle and a pitcher of water. The possessed servitor approaches the sacred center post and spills a little water on the ground for the deity. After certain other rituals, the houngan, or one of his assistants, conducts the mounted "horse" into the hounfor to the altar. In the following song, as the possession comes on, there is a call for a lighted candle.

Simbi non wè oh!
Simbi djab non wè!
Oh Simbi non wè oh!
Simbi non wè oh!
Simbi wa *kenté* chandelle pou' clairé moin! [Ex. 68]

Simbi doesn't see, oh!
Sure Simbi doesn't see!
Oh, Simbi doesn't see, oh!
Simbi doesn't see, oh!
Simbi [says] you will light the candle so I can see!

Some of the songs refer to the dancing of the las who enter the bodies of the servitors. The deity Loko asks for his hounsi, through whom he will dance:

Coté pitits moin yo,
Mainain'm nan hounfor, m'ap djailli!
No pas Loko,
Coté pitits moin yo! [Ex. 69]

Where are my children,
Take me into the hounfor, I will *djailli*!
Now, Loko,
Where are my children!

Another deity, who is not expressly named, tells his "leaves in the woods"—that is, his hounsi—that he has danced since he was a child:

Fi nan bois bâlé moin!
Oh dépi'm pitit m'ap danse!
Fi nan bois bâ-lé
Fi nan bois bâlé moin oh!
Oh fi nan bois bâlé moin oh!
Dépi'm pitit m'ap danse!
Fi nan bois bâlé moin! [Ex. 70]

Leaves in the woods call me!
Oh, since I was small I have danced!
Leaves in the woods *bâ-lé*
Leaves in the woods call me, oh!
Oh, leaves in the woods call me, oh!
Since I was small I have danced!
Leaves in the woods call me!

In the following song the las Macoya Bumba is called upon by the hounsi to hurry up and get on with his dancing.

Macoya Bumba Bumba!
Lévé danse!
Macoya Bumba!
Bumba nana chez vini danse! [Ex. 71]

Macoya Bumba Bumba!
Get up and dance!
Macoya Bumba!
Bumba my dear, come and dance!

A song for the deity Lasman in the course of the Ibo dancing and ritual goes:

Ibo lélé!
Ibo lélé!
Manchan Ibo yo ava guinyain ava yo Ibo lélé!

2: Courlander 8-5 (1937-1964) 1960 8V3 Hehl 8V3

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Ianman con çi, con çi!
Ianman con çi'm dansé Ibo!
Ianman con çi, con çi!
Ianman con çi'm dansé Ibo!
Ianman con çi, con çi!
Ianman é-wa é-wa é-wa! [Ex. 71]

Ibo *Mbé*
Ibo *Mbé*
Ibo Nation, what are you doing there, Ibo *Mbé*
Ianman, like that, like that!
Ianman, like that I dance the Ibo!
Ianman, like that, like that!
Ianman, like that I dance the Ibo!
Ianman, like that, like that!
Ianman *é-wa é-wa é-wa!*

Another song containing the same acutal appreciation of dancing is for the lou Kitta. The words "my mother isn't dead" and "my father isn't dead" are simply expressions of good fortune and happiness which embellish the command to do the Kitta steps:

Ai ti gi'yan ba'm pas Kitta!
Kitta Congo oh ti gi'yan ba'm pas Kitta!

Manman pas manzi ba'm pas Kitta!
Kitta Congo oh ti gi'yan ba'm pas Kitta!

M'dis pitit gi'yan ba'm pas Kitta!
Kitta Congo oh ti gi'yan ba'm pas Kitta!

Papa pas manzi ba'm pas Kitta!
Kitta Congo oh ti gi'yan ba'm pas Kitta! [Ex. 72]

Ai, little man, give me the Kitta steps!
Kitta Congo, oh, little man, give me the Kitta steps!

My mother is not dead, give me the Kitta steps!
Kitta Congo, oh, little man, give me the Kitta steps!

I say little man, give me the Kitta steps!
Kitta Congo, oh, little man, give me the Kitta steps!

My father is not dead, give me the Kitta steps!
Kitta Congo, oh, little man, give me the Kitta steps!]

A song for the lou Bambara describes the movements of his dance. Bambara is symbolized by the crab, and the dance posture with "low hips" is regarded as characteristic of the crab's movements:

Bambara kap pwomennen, talbe bas!
Bambara ale pwomennen, talbe bas!

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[For footnote, see category 86, p. 351. --Analyst]

2: Courlander 8-5 (1877-1965) 1960 BV3 Haiti BV3

Rambuzo is walking, low hips!
Rambuzo is going to walk, low hips!

Damballa Wèdo, being a snake deity, "threads" or "winds" his way like a serpent, and this song describes a serpentine course taken by the dancers as Damballa (here identified as a Nago man) arrives:

Fifé na fifé, Damballa Wèdo vini wè mwin!
Fifé na fifé, N'g' Nago vini wè'm lil [Ex. 74]

Wind, we wind, Damballa Wèdo comes to see me!
Wind, we wind, the Nago man comes to see me here!

After the dancing has been going on for a long while and the pace is fast, there may be a song of banter, such as the following from the Dahomey rites. The dancers sing *lalilé, lalilé!*, describing a figure of the dance in which the skirts are swirled, and note that they have worn out the drummers. They even offer to carry on their backs those dancers who are ready to fall by the wayside:

Lalilé lalilé!
Oh lalilé lalilé oh vièux'l
Tambouyé boukó!
Tambouyé boukó vièux'l
Lalilé lalilé oh vièux'l
Lalilé lalilé tambouyé boukó kwongwo'wé
M'pa'wé woo cwayo mwin vié wé!
Tambouyé boukó gé!
Lalilé lalilé! [Ex. 75]

Lalilé lalilé!
Oh, *lalilé lalilé*, oh, old people!
The drummers are tired!
The drummers are tired, old people!
Lalilé lalilé, oh, old people!
Lalilé lalilé, the drummers are tired, my *kwongwo*!
I'll carry you on my back, old sister!
The drummers are tired there!
Lalilé lalilé!

Interspersed among the songs of the banter there are sometimes warnings or admonitions. Usually they are tangent and indirect in statement, and may be from the point of view of the lwa or of the houngan. In the following possession song, which accompanies the ritual of making magic, there is a warning to certain people who will feel the effects of the magic. The ceremony includes, among other things, the dropping of leaves, roots, and leaves by the houngan into his sacred basin or pond. The houngan sings:

2: Coulander 8-6 (1827-1910) 1903 8V3 Hebi 8V3

Trois fil trois cirons ah!
Trois fil trois cirons ah!
Moin dit vous, youn jour ou va besoin moin!
Trois fil trois racine ah!
Moin dit oui, youn jour ou va besoin moin!
Gainyain besoin moin trois racine tombé isidans,
Quand ou va' blié fas' ramassé chanpé! [Ex. 76]

Three leaves, three lemons, ah!
Three leaves, three lemons, ah!
I say you, one day you are going to need me!
Three leaves, three roots, ah!
I say yes, one day you are going to need me!
I have my yard into which three roots fall,
When you wish to forget you will have to remember!

In another song the houngan warns against ingratitude on the part of persons for whom special magical services have been carried out:

Ouanga ça ah ouanga chaud!
Ouanga ça ouanga chaud!
Li pas' payé li pingo ou faché!
Ou mandé'm ouanga li ou content!
Ou mandé'm ouanga li ou content!
Li pas' payé li pingo ou faché! [Ex. 77]

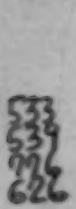
This ouanga, ah, hot ouanga!
This ouanga, ah, hot ouanga!
When it's time to pay for it don't be angry!
You ask me for the ouanga, you are happy!
You ask me for the ouanga, you are happy!
When it's time to pay for it don't be angry!

Somberly and in metaphor, the deity Kitta Démembré speaks of an unhappy event which occurred in the town of Léogane, and warns those concerned that it must not happen again:

Kitta Démembré, pingo ou fai'm ça 'core ah!
Nan Léogane ti pouss-li manzé nan nil!
Nan Léogane ti pouss-li manzé nan nil ah!
Kitta Démembré, pingo ou fai'm ça encore ah! [Ex. 78]

Kitta Démembré, take care that you don't do that to me again, ah!
In Léogane the little children died in its egg!
In Léogane the little children died in its egg!
Kitta Démembré, take care that you don't do that to me again!

An unnamed spirit warns that the moment for placation has come and suggests that calling on him after he has gone from the *poteau* of the houngan Dorvis would be of no use. [912]



M'apé rélé mwin en bas pavillon lwa mwin!
Lainel'm délivré mwin en bas pavillon oh Dayès!
Jou'm rélé pingo you lemonwin nonm mwin! [Ex. 79]

I will call, I am under the lwa's canopy!
Let me get straightened out under Dayès's canopy!
The day I am gone take care they do not call my name!

In a lighter vein, to the gayest of music, there is this admonition that a wrong cannot be righted simply by saying "excuse me":

Bw bW!
Bw bW!
Pâl pinl'm mo monnl'm pardon!
Pâl pinl'm mo monnl'm pardon!
Ça pardon-lâ wa fait pou' moin? [Ex. 8a]

Bw bW!
Bw bW!
You step on my foot and ask my pardon!
You step on my foot and ask my pardon!
The pardon, what good will it do me?

And the deity Ogoun Kénéon warns those who do not speak of him with respect that he is not ready to accept such a slight as a light matter.

Ogoun YIIAÏ YIIAÏ ça Nèg' Kénéon dî
Ogoun YIIAÏ ça Nèg' Kénéon dî
Oh tous lès jours c'est pa'lî Ogoun mal!
Ogoun pas conn' batèd! [Ex. 8a]

Ogoun YIIAÏ YIIAÏ there, man of Kénéon!
Ogoun YIIAÏ there, man of Kénéon!
Oh, constantly talking bad about Ogoun!
Ogoun doesn't like joking!

The lwa Ogoun Panama, like ordinary mortals, is concerned about people who "come to look and go away to talk."

Ogoun oh m' c'est Nèg' Panama dî
Ogoun oh m' c'est Nèg' Panama dî
Tu vini pa'lî!
Tu vini pa'lî!
Oh Ogoun oh m' c'est Nèg' Panama dî [Ex. 8a]

Ogoun, oh, I am the Panama man dî
Ogoun, oh, I am the Panama man dî
They come to look!
They come to look!
Oh, Ogoun, oh, I am the Panama man dî

St Constantin B-S (1837-1955) 1960 8V3 HaBI 8V3

The lwa Aïzan complains more vigorously of the bad behavior of human beings:

Aïzan Aïzan!
Dipis tanjo y'ap pa'lé nou ouzin!
Ginè yo pou gainyain?
Bouche à yo papa papa!
Djoubi à yo pèsè pèsè!
Ginè yo pou' yo pa'dou ek? [Ex. 83]

Aïzan, Aïzan!
For a long time they have been talking about me!
What's wrong with them?
Their mouths go *papa papa*!
Their jaws go *pèsè pèsè*!
What is the excuse?

Even on routine business the lwa are inclined to be petulant, or to protest that they have been mistreated, that their followers gossip about them, or that they are not ardent enough. Here the deity Simbi en dlo Enzo complains bitterly that she is not loved by her servitors, the "leaves in the woods," and asks a hound named Lolo for news to take to spirits of the ancestors who live "below the water":

Fè nan bois con ça nou yè!
Nan point coumin pas nouvèl quinte!
Fè nan bois con ça nou yè!
Nan point coumin pas nouvèl quinte!
Simbi en dlo Enzo,
Qui nouvi en lan dlouze!
Gouté ça pa lui mouin!
M'dit Lolo, ba mouin nouvelle pou'm ba yui [Ex. 84]

Leaves in the woods, that's the way you are!
There is no love that does not ask to end!
Leaves in the woods, that's the way you are!
There is no love that does not ask to end!
Simbi en dlo Enzo,
Who comes from below the water!
See what they do to me!
I say, Lolo, give me the news to give them!

But if the lwa complain about the behavior of their followers, the servitors also may complain. Songs sung in the bounfor may chide the deities for ancestral deeds, for forgetting their "children," or for carelessness. In the following song the spirit Maît' Gran Chimin is criticized for smashing his "leaves" with such fury that they are thrown about

violently. The locusts complain that Ndé Grand Chimin treats them as though they were flour being ground in a mill:

Temp' changé nouvelle ché!
Bonjour' Papa bonjour' Ndé Grand Chimin!
M'mandé Papa qu'in fait!
Temp' changé nouvelle ché!
Bonjour' Papa bonjour' Ndé Grand Chimin!
M'mandé Papa qu'in fait!
Papa m'pas mais moulin!
Nous dit na bongé moins!
Papa m'pas mais moulin!
Nous dit na bongé moins! [L. 85]

Times change, the news go out!
Good day, Papa, good day,Ndé Grand Chimin!
I ask you, Papa, what did [do]?
Times change, the news go out!
Good day, Papa, good day,Ndé Grand Chimin!
I ask you, Papa, what did [do]?
Papa, I am not corn flour!
You say you will grind me
Papa, I am not corn flour!
You say you will grind me

When there is sickness within the world there may be songs for the absent ones. Here is a song for an ailing locusts:

Mais ché wé li, locusts malade ché!
Mais ché wé qu, locusts malade ché!
Mais ché wé bongue, locusts malade ché! [Ex. 86]

I am going to see there, the locust is sick, ché!
I am going to see it, the locust is sick, ché!
I am going to see, bongue[who locusts is sick, ché!

Again, the members of the world all upon Ogoun, or St. Jacques, to help one of their number who is sic:

St. Jacques monté cheval li,
Li pas dit personne ché,
Vitpé li pas' route!
Li mo galopin vers,
Li mo galopin malino mo dos,
St. Jacques ché!
Ba li bein pas' route! [Ex. 87]

St. Jacques dos his home,
He tells no one, ch,
Take care of him for me!
He may have worms,
He may have sore on his back,
St. Jacques, ché!
Protect him for me!

Ogoun is the dispenser of rum, and is virtually all Ogoun rituals rum is at some time or another in evidence. Sometimes rum is poured into a hot iron pot and burns into flame. The rum pot is dedicated to Ogoun's

house, which is on fire. But there is no grief, because Ogoun is the master of fire:

Feeee, Feeee Nanéwe ohé	Feeee, Feeee Nanéwe, ohé
Yaga wondo-ô	Yaga wondo-ô
Caille Ogoun brulé!	Ogoun's house is burning!
Gâdève Ogoun bel Dî	Ogoun's distillery is beautiful!
Na consolé! [Ex. 88]	We console ourselves!

Some of the ritual songs that have persisted through the years have lost their explicit meaning but continue to survive because of beautiful melodies and perhaps the strange images they evoke. Such a song is this one to the lwa Avti Dzi, from the Dahomey service:

Avti Dzi ohé	Avti Dzi, ohé
Yo wayé dé mwin	They were to tell me
Min wéwé mahinhi!*	The sun was sick!
Quan'lin ni zinsi	When I arrived
Mwin jénsé wéwé wassili	I found the sun had died!
Quan'lin ni zinsi	When I arrived
Mwin jénsé wéwé wassili	I found the sun had died!
C'est regrettable ça	What grief it was
Pou'in wassili wéwé! [Ex.89]	For me to bury the sun!

One of the truly lovely songs of the Dahomey rites, both in melody and in lyrics, is the following one to the deity Erzilie. It shows clear evidence of Catholic ritual influence in both its text and its music. Erzilie Fréda, who seems to be speaking most of the lines, is identified with the Virgin Mary, and the tune of this piece casts her more in her Catholic role than her African. The deity is speaking from Tagnon, a place described as being "on the other side of the water." In form the song is atypical in that it has more than one movement and progresses from one idea to another.

Erzilie Nénonin ohé
Erzilie Nénonin ohé
Erzilie oh, c'est moin Tagnon!

Erzilie o'ip mouché o'ip mouté o'ip pwélé pwé' wonpe y'ip pwélé pwendo moin!
Erzilie o'ip mouché o'ip mouté pwé' wonpe y'ip pwélé pwendo mouté!
Erzilie Nénonin ohé
Erzilie Fréda oh Nénonin ohé
Erzilie Fréda oh, c'est moin Tagnon!

Nénonmon oh yo dédon mon wuffin li yo vié djwélé oh mon wonpe wuhé pou lévé
Nénonmon yo pouvé yo wuhé vé à gbénon y'ipé gbénonlon la mon pé!

*Some Dahomeans volunteered that wéwé means "sun." Others felt that this word in the song was really hwé, a diminutive of dokwé, another name for Avti Dzi.

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Ballie Naimain oh!
Ballie Naimain oh!
Ballie oh ha' e'en comin Yagona!

Lawland fal lumda tom tompa oshill pan Well!
Lawland fal lumda tom tompa oshill pan Well!
Ballie Naimain oh!
Ballie Naimain oh!
Ballie Pebble oh, cool comin ha' Yagona!

Ballie Pebble Nig' Sabo Nig' Grand Chimin Nig' Babinwood Cockliquid choke ya!
Ballie Naimain oh!
Ballie Naimain oh!
Ballie Pebble cool on yit? Main ti Yagona! [En. pe]

Grandmother Ballie, oh!
Grandmother Ballie, oh!
It is I Ballie, Yagona!

Ballie we are walking, we are listening, we are speaking, they are speaking my words now!
Ballie we are walking, we are listening, they are speaking my words now!
Grandmother Ballie, oh!
Ballie Pebble, oh, Grandmother, oh!
Ballie Pebble, oh, it is I, Yagona!

The weavers shining in the house there, they want to have a good time, oh, until the sun comes up!
The weavers go by, they fall on the earth on their knees, they complain about their troubles!
Grandmother Ballie, oh!
Grandmother Ballie, oh!
Ballie, oh, it is I on Yagona side!

The dew glistens until the sun comes up!
The dew glistens until the sun comes up!
Grandmother Ballie, oh!
Grandmother Ballie, oh!
Ballie Pebble, oh, I am on Yagona side!

Ballie Pebble, Nig' Sabo, Nig' Grand Chimin, Nig' Babinwood, Cockliquid, fetch them!*
Grandmother Ballie, oh!
Grandmother Ballie, oh!
Ballie Pebble, where are you? I am on Yagona side!

---

* These women he are being called upon here to withdraw and are to remain upon the scene while Ballie is present.

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others only half believe, and many look upon these creatures as imaginary but exciting to talk about.

The zombie finds a favored place in the tales children make up to tell one another, and the traditional song played by children on the earth bow or mouquito drum goes:

Mouloguzin pingo zombie oh, Bobo Maria!
Mouloguzin pingo zombie!
Mouloguzin pingo zombie, pingo zombie, pingo zombie, pingo zombie, pingo zombie!
Mouloguzin pingo zombie! [Ex. 51]

Mouquito lowere the zombie, oh, Bobo Maria!
Mouquito lowere the zombie!
Mouquito lowere the zombie, lowere the zombie, lowere the zombie, lowere the zombie, lowere the zombie!
Mouquito lowere the zombie!

Or they may sing with great bravado, to the clapping of hands:

Chaingaloing, nou pral mangé zombie!
Chaingaloing, nou vaut!
Chaingaloing, nou pral mangé zombie!
Chaingaloing, ehhouté!
Chaingaloing, nou pral mangé zombie!
Chaingaloing, kalenkalenning! [Ex. 52]

Chaingaloing, we are going to eat a zombie!
Chaingaloing, we can!
Chaingaloing, we are going to eat a zombie!
Chaingaloing, ehhouté!
Chaingaloing, we are going to eat a zombie!
Chaingaloing, kalenkalenning!

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8. *Mardi Gras and Rara: Jugglers, Maypoles, and Kings*

From early in January until Easter, each year, the Haitian countryside is infected with a riotous carnival spirit that puts all else in the background. First comes Mardi Gras, beginning early in January and building to a great climax at Shrovetide. And then on Ash Wednesday begins the seven-week festival known as Rara, Lewalwadi, or Charivpâl.

Every week end in the Mardi Gras season the country roads and villages are alive with special music, dancing bands, and traditional kinds of masquerading. The little crossroads in the mountains where the Arahuacs usually hold their markets are suddenly swarming with drummers, trumpeters, magicians, jugglers, masked dancers, and acrobats. Each band has its own name, its banners and paraphernalia, new topical songs composed for the occasion, and sometimes a clergy sponsor. Each roving band competes for the attention and admiration of the spectators, and its ranks are often swelled by passers-by moving in the same direction who choose to dance their way along the roads rather than walk. Often women and girls on distant market grounds will join in the celebration, seemingly unencumbered by the heavy loads they carry on their heads.

The Mardi Gras of the mountains and the plains is a dynamic spring rite of which the urban elite version is only a pale and feeble imitation. There are no pretty floats, no exhibits of female beauty, and no Coca-Cola advertisements. Sometimes the country bands move into Port-au-Prince and join the urban activities.

One by one the spectacles pass by on their uncertain way—to north or south, into the town or out of the town, wherever chance leads them. In addition to the musicians, acrobats, jugglers, and masked dancers, there are house raisers, comedians on stilts, and mimes. Each group has its own theme. One may call itself the Zombeyaje, another the Cochons Gris, another Cochons Rouges—names designating legendary

Si Courtesier B-6 (1937-1964) 1980 SV3 Haiti SV3

541 half-demon cannibals who meet in secret in the hollow heart of the mapou tree. Some are dressed in comic ancient military attire, replete with swords, epaulets, medals, and outlandish beards, representing "the Generals." Others, under the name Bande Autophonique, follow a human phonograph—a leader singing through an antique Edison horn.

541 53 And there are bands of male *rabaniers*, or Maypole dancers, some of them attired as women, weaving their colored ribbons around portable poles, to the accompaniment of guitars, marimbulas, and cha-chas. Male stick dancers known as *batonni*, dressed in women's clothing, crouch in circles and perform baton-tapping dances to the accompaniment of drumming and singing. Other small bands wander about impersonating characters from folklore or politics in grotesque homemade costumes. One might see, for example, a fanciful boeuf driving before him a band of zombies, wielding a whip, and barking out weird raucous commands.

After the cataclysmic grand finale of the Mardi Gras at Shrovetide there is the briefest of lulls, and then the country is in the throes of Rara. The day of the *roi* Lwalwali (the King of Lwalwali) has arrived. Hundreds of Rara bands move through the towns and villages, each with its orchestra of bamboo trumpets or conch-shell horns and its "king"—an ornately clad dancer or baton juggler. The Rara bands move from place to place, dance, sing, exhibit their featured performers, and then move on, pressed perhaps by other bands behind them or jostled by another group moving in the opposite direction. When darkness comes, the bands light their way with wooden torches or candelabra of tiny oil lamps. Every week end for seven weeks, in the heat of day and the darkness of night, the mountain trails are alive with these processions.

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541 The Rara festivities reach their climax on Good Friday week end, and by Easter morning they are ended. During these final days there is a last grand display, with troupes coming in from the mountains and the plains to the larger cities and towns. One of the traditional Rara convocation centers in the south is the town of Léogâne. On Good Friday week end, Léogâne is transformed into a milling, surging, trumpeting mass of celebrating country people.

● 533 531 536 The songs heard during Rara are full of praise or derision for well-known personalities. Some of them are boldly ribald or licentious. And often the dancing itself is openly sexual in its implications. Haitians humorously refer to this kind of dancing as *rasyé* (enraged, crazy).

541 675 Early in January, even while the Mardi Gras is in progress, each community gets down to the business of organizing its Rara group. It may be organized in one of several ways. In certain communities there

2: Courlander B-5 (1907-1968) 1960 BV3 Haiti BV3

and covered with tiny mirrors or bits of colored glass. The towering headdress of antlers or papier-mâché sculpture unavoidably recalls similar headdresses in West Africa. Each roi has his own style of dance, which is usually accompanied by drums. It may be a belly dance, a dance of delicate balance, or one of complicated footwork and semiacrobatics such as the imitation of a pair of scissors at work. Throughout the dancing the headdress remains majestically erect.

In addition to the roi Lwalwadi and the mâit' Rara (who is constantly in the midst of things, blowing his whistle), there are other traditional Rara personalities: the *major jone*, who juggles with a metal baton (sometimes two or three of these jugglers work together), and the *jonglew*, a juggler or strong man who performs such feats as dancing while holding a fully set table off the ground with his teeth.

On the southwest peninsula, in the region around Jérémie, there is a splurge of wrestling exhibitions during Rara days. Known as *pingé*, this festival wrestling is done with a background of excited drumming and has a striking resemblance to wrestling traditions in West Africa. Local "champions" will invade a neighboring community, sometimes traveling considerable distances to make a challenge. As in West Africa, some of these wrestlers take their own musicians with them. The musicians often are provided by the village in which the events take place. If a challenge is accepted, the spectators form a large circle, with the wrestlers in the center and the musicians to one side. There may be drums and bamboo flutes, occasionally supplemented by large earthern jars and lengths of bamboo beaten with sticks. The wrestlers are dressed only in shorts. When a man is thrown, the event is over, and another pair of wrestlers takes over. Sometimes a "champion" will take on a series of opponents until he is tired. Afterward he may move on to another community to find new competition, perhaps accompanied by a large group of friends and supporters from his own village. When the Rara season comes to an end, pingé is over for the year. It is one of the few athletic sport activities of the Haitian peasant.

And now and then during Rara a *debois* is seen. The *debois* is a carved wooden marionette with a short handle below. Its arms and legs are moved by pulling a string. It is usually painted, and sometimes it is dressed. One debois observed was provided with a loose dresslike costume; when the string was pulled, a large phallus hinged into view in an erect position. This marionette was an object of endless funmaking among spectators.[*]

Another type of marionette is the "Two Kings," made of papier-mâché and operated with strings. The "Two Kings," sitting in a papier-

[*] [Footnote appears in Category 16, p. 351. --Analyst]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 ST3 Haiti ST3
[P 112-CC]

c. Vodoun drummers, northern Haiti. The drums are characteristic of that region. The boy at left, although only twelve or thirteen years old, is an accomplished drummer.

compensated by a "feast" and party given at the end of the day by the host. More usual than the *coumbite* is the regular sharing of work on one another's fields—the *reunde*, or "taking turns."

An early morning work gathering is known as a *doumvant jou*'. It meets early in the day, sometimes before dawn, continues until ten or eleven in the morning, when the sun becomes hot, and then disperses. An afternoon coumbite is called a *dine-machete* (dinner machete) and lasts from about two in the afternoon until early evening. When the work is finished, the men go to the house of the host, where they have dinner, much in the manner of the American threshing party. An all-day affair is called a grand coumbite.

Essential to all coumbites are musicians and singing leaders. The instruments used are various, according to local custom. In the south they are usually drums, *tymbales*, and bamboo trumpets. In some areas of the north, the *lambi*, or conch-shell trumpet, is favored.

According to the custom in the south, on the day of the coumbite the drummers arise in the false dawn before sunrise and begin a roundabout march to the house of the host. They pass before the huts of all the neighbors who are going to join the party, playing a *rappel* on the drums. By one's and two's the workers come down the trails to join the procession, bringing hoes, machetes, or sickles as required. As the marching group grows larger, there is talking, laughter, and perhaps singing. Most of the men who join the procession are from close by. Others who may have to travel from a distance, perhaps from the next valley, go directly to the house of the host. When the workers arrive there, the women of the house serve coffee. This is the usual breakfast of the Haitian peasant.

Then the drummers play another *rappel*, and the men go down to the field that is to be tilled. There may be ten, twenty, or fifty of them. Some coumbites are even larger. If the group is a small one, the men line up together. The singing leader, called a *samba* or *sirnidor*, begins a song, the drummers play, the hoes begin to rise and fall in unison, and the workers join in the singing. If the group is large it will divide into two or three squads, each trying to outdo the other. The men stand shoulder to shoulder, moving the hoes up and down together, syncopating their movements by pauses as they sing their responsive parts. Sometimes tafia or rum is portioned out. The squads move forward slowly, inching their way across the field. The samba beats on his hoe blade with a stone to keep time for his song. His job is to "encourage" the men. He may sing old familiar songs or compose new ones, songs with humor and bite in them, ribald songs, and songs of ridicule. They may criticize

men who have failed to join the coumbite, or praise the host, or single out various individuals for comment. The songs of the coumbite are a newspaper of the affairs of the people. The news is personalized, editorialized, and replete with comic vignettes.[1]

At noon the drummers signal a halt, and the workers shoulder their hoes, wipe off their machetes, and adjourn to the house for food. If it is a grand coumbite, the men rest for several hours, talking, catching up on sleep, or playing cards or *mayouka*. About three o'clock they go back to the fields to work until evening. Then comes the feast, under the canopy adjoining the house. The host and his wife have killed and cooked one or more goats, depending on the size of the group. The men are served meat, rice, beans, and whatever else has been prepared. Afterward, women join the party, and there is more tafia or rum. Some of the men then drift homeward, but most stay on for dancing. Zeze, Congo, or Juba drums are brought out, and the festivities begin. If another coumbite is not scheduled for the next day, the music and dancing may last well into the night.

Women, too, have coumbites to perform various kinds of large tasks, from field work to winnowing and coffee sorting, though in general the women's work groups lack the festive character of the men's gatherings.

There is a more tightly knit form of coumbite, known as a *société*. In southern Haiti there are the société Congo and the société Martinique; in northern Haiti there is the société Clyé. These sociétés are clubs built around mutual work needs and recreational activities. The société Congo that appears in the town or city streets during Rara days, with bamboo or conch-shell trumpets, drums, flags, and masks, is usually composed of the men who have joined forces to till the fields. In some instances, it may also conform roughly to membership in a particular houmfor, or cult center. Unlike the ordinary coumbite, the société is not a group which meets only at ground-breaking or harvesting time; it is a permanent organization with regular, sometimes day-to-day, obligations. Week after week it moves from one man's land to another, doing the tasks that have to be done. There is no question of "Can you come?" The group goes first to one man's land, then to another's until all the work has been done. If a member of the société falls sick, so that he cannot work his own field, the société takes over his tasks for him.

Coumbites are held not only for agricultural work but for house-building, and sometimes for the building of a houmfor.

The Haitian coöperative work group has much in common with European and American husking and barn-building parties; but it has

[1] [For footnote see Category 116, p. 352. -- Analyst]

many non-European characteristics. The manner of work, even down to specific motor activity, has direct and hardly disputable West African connections. Instead of the short-handled West African hoe, the Haitians use a long-handled one, and they work more erect than stooped. But the rhythmic, synchronized use of the hoe, the singing leader and the musicians who stand to one side to "encourage" the workers, the calling of the workers by drum *rappels*, the special consideration for the sick, and the concept of long-term community endeavor are all of West African beginnings. The coumbite is the legitimate descendant of the Dahomean *dokpwe*, the *kuvum* of the Mandjila (Cameroons), the *ku* of the Kpelle (Liberia), and other West African cooperative systems.

Although the *dokpwe* of Dahomey is a more formal and intricate institution, permeated with certain abstract and ritual concepts, its social and functional characteristics are not greatly different from those of the Haitian coumbite, in which cooperation is marked. Herskovits notes that working with the Dahomean *dokpwe*

> represents recreation rather than labor to the individual member. There is song and dance to drumming and the sound of gongs, on the way and after arrival, and there is feasting and an exhibition of skill. It is an impressive sight to see from forty to a hundred men kneading earth for walls, or laying thatch, or hoeing the earth with unison movements to the accompaniment of conversation and laughter, and the songs of each of their fellows, who, for the moment at rest, have constituted themselves the chorus.

When more than one *dokpwe* is summoned for work on the same project, Herskovits notes,

> there is great rivalry among the organizations to see which one will first complete its allotted task. If only one *dokpwe* is present, there is either individual rivalry, or the *dokpwe* may be divided into two groups which compete one against the other. The food which is provided at these times of collective labor is as rich fare as the owner can afford . . .[1]

An underlying factor in the Dahomean *dokpwe* is awareness of itself as "the manpower of Dahomey," and the members regard themselves as exercising their fundamental privilege as Dahomeans. This attitude toward the coumbite continues to prevail in Haiti. Like the houngfor—but even more significantly in terms of routine, workaday life—the coumbite and the société are an expression of social ties and of the pervading interest in the common welfare.

Certain patterns of the coumbite have been carried over into non-agrarian labor in the towns and cities, wherever group work is required. The carrying of coffee and sugar bags in the warehouses, the loading of ships, and the repairing of roads—all are traditionally performed

[1] [Herskovits, "Some Aspects of Dahomean Ethnology," Africa, Vol. V (July, 1932), pp. 266-296. Cf. p. 352, Category 116. -- Analyst]

rhythmically, to the accompaniment of drums, cutac, or horns, while a singing leader composes topical songs in which the laborers join.

The tools which a rural Haitian chooses, and the way he uses them, often are in a West African tradition. He performs a multitude of tasks with his machete, or bush knife: weeding a garden, peeling an orange, cutting down a tree, making a drum or mortar, opening a coconut. It is an all-purpose tool, as it is in Africa. Until a few years ago it was supplemented by the extra-long, heavier, "double machete." The axe and the chisel are known and used too, but the machete is supreme. The hoe is the tool for tilling the soil, even in the flat country, and even though the Haitian has horses and cattle which could pull a plow. Horses are for riding and not for pulling. In carrying loads, the Haitian peasant still prefers the load to the shoulders. If he has a donkey, the donkey will carry for him. An old Haitian proverb goes: "Mèsi Bondieu pou' bourrique li, si nous pas gainyain bourrique li fout Haitien pa'l vant bagaille" (Thank God for the donkey, if we didn't have the donkey the Haitian would have to carry everything)." Generally speaking, the rough and rocky terrain of Haiti and inadequate secondary roads have done nothing to encourage the use of carts or wagons.

Corn is stored in the trees, as in West Africa, or in granaries built upon stilts, also as in West Africa. The Haitian makes his fire in the African fashion, with several long sticks or poles meeting point-to-point in the heart of the fire. As the ends are consumed, the sticks are pushed toward the center. Grain is pulverized in large wooden mortars, as in West Africa, and winnowed in a woven tray. Fish traps are sometimes woven in the traditional West African manner, and fishermen often set their nets in converging spirals and beat the water with sticks to drive the fish to the center. And on the rivers and lakes are to be seen dugout canoes of a kind familiar on the inland waters of West Africa.

The folklore of the fields contains many themes known to the West African. One old Haitian farmer, discussing the spiritual relationship of the planter to the earth, declared that a man must be strong and potent when he plants, else the crops will be vitiated and sickly. For this reason, he said, a man must not plant seeds the day after he has had sexual intercourse, because he has been temporarily drained of his life-giving powers.[9]

The tale of the hoe that worked by itself in the fields is also widespread. It enters many animal and Bouki stories, and also is known in a form that is familiar in West Africa. In this story, there was once a man who owned a hoe which worked by itself whenever a magical formula was pronounced. It would stop working whenever the magical

9 [For footnote, see Category 116, P 352.-- Analyst]

tions helped to perpetuate some prevailing misunderstandings and errors. This distinguished observer wrote:

> The Negroes of the Gold Coast, warlike, bloody, accustomed to human sacrifice, know only dances as ferocious as themselves, while those from the Congo, Senegalese and other African shepherds or agricultural tribes, love dancing as a relaxation, as a source of sensual pleasure. Brought from all parts of Africa to our Colonies . . . , the Negroes brought here and preserved their taste for the dance, a taste so strong that, however tired out from work the Negro may be, he always finds strength to dance and even to travel a long distance to satisfy this desire.
>
> When the Negroes want to dance, they take two drums, that is, two hollow logs, of unequal length, with one end open, while the other is covered with sheepskin. These drums . . . resound under blows of the wrist and forearm of the fingers of a Negro who sits astride of each drum. The larger drum is beaten slowly, the other more rapidly. This monotonous and hollow sound is accompanied by the noise of a certain number of calabashes which have been filled with pebbles . . . Several *banzas*, a sort of large guitar with four strings,[1] join the concert, the tempo of which is regulated by the clapping hands of the Negro women, who form a large circle. They form a sort of chorus, which responds to one or two soloists who voice, which repeat or improvise a song.[2]

As for the dance movements themselves, Saint-Méry wrote:

> A male and [a] female dancer, or several dancers divided into equal numbers of each sex, jump into the center of the circle and begin to dance, always two by two. This dance, which varies little, consists of a very simple step in which one foot is put forward after the other, and then dragged back quickly, while striking the toe and the heel on the ground . . . Some turn to place, or around the woman, who turns also and changes places with her partner; that is all which one sees, except for the movement of the arms which the men raise and lower with the elbows quite close to the body and the hands almost closed. The women hold two ends of a handkerchief, which she waves . . . One would hardly believe how lively and animated it is, and how much grace it derives from the strictness with which the musical rhythm is followed. The dancers replace one another without respite, and the Negroes are so intoxicated with pleasure that it is necessary to force them to conclude dances of this sort, called *kalendes*.[3]

Saint-Méry then brings forth one of his conclusions, that this dance is obviously the development of a "comparatively uncivilized people," and that it comes from Africa, "where its characteristic features exist everywhere, even among the Hottentots."

Here he missed the point altogether. Although many of the characteristics of this *kalendes* (or Calinda) were African, it had already been intensively hybridized with European dance concepts, such as the pairing off of males and females, who danced as couples. Then, as today, the dances which amazed and shocked the European observer were precisely the ones that had taken over certain European traditions.

1 [Actually a banjo-like instrument of African provenance. The similarity of the word banza to banjo appears to be more than a coincidence. Cf. P 352, Category 116. — Analyst]
2 [Saint-Méry, *De la danse*, as translated by Lillian Moore in "African Survivals in Saint Méry and Danse," *Dance Index*, October, 1946, P 238. Cf. P 352, Category 116. — Analyst]
3 Moore, *op. cit.*, P. 238. Cf. P 352, Category 116. — Analyst]

Saint-Méry also wrote about some of the religious dances, which he identified by name:

> In Santo Domingo, and especially in the western, French section, there has existed for a long time a kind of dance called the Vaudoux [Vodoun] . . . which is characterized by movements where the upper part of the body, the shoulders and the head seem to move convulsively. This dance is accompanied by the drums, the clapping of hands, and group singing . . .
>
> The Vaudoux is nothing compared to the Dan Pedro . . . , another Negro dance, also known in the western part of Santo Domingo since 1788. Dan Pedro was the name of a Negro of the Petit-Goave section, of Spanish origin, who by his daring character and certain superstitious practices, had acquired among the Negroes enough influence to be denounced by the government as the instigator of some alarming plots. The dance which bears his name consists, like the Vaudoux, in the shaking of the shoulders and the head, but this shaking is extremely violent, and to increase it still further the Negroes drink, while dancing, brandy in which they have mixed finely ground gunpowder . . .[1] They dance with the most horrible contortions, until finally they fall into a sort of epilepsy . . .[2]

Making allowances for Saint-Méry's imaginative interpretation of many of the things he saw, the Haitian dance of today is not far different from that of the eighteenth century. It is cast in the West African mold, with Dahomean and Yoruban motifs predominating over European and other Western infiltrations. As in Saint-Méry's day, the drummers sit at the edge of the dance court, a leader wielding a gourd rattle leads the singing, and the dancers and spectators constitute the chorus. The dancers usually move around the center of the court in a counterclockwise direction. Their steps and postures vary according to the type of dance being performed. The Juvenile, for example, is danced with a bent back, hands touching the knees. In the Zépaule dance the dancers are erect, and most of the movements are made with the shoulders. In the Pétro (the Dan Pedro described by Saint-Méry) there is a constant, almost agitated movement of the feet. The songs accompanying these cult dances, while presented in African style, may have hybrid or even French melodies, though in the main they are more African than European. The over-all context of the cult dances, as well as most of the secular ones, is West African, with constant interplay between the singers, dancers, and drummers. Sometime the dancers "drive" the drummers, sometimes the drummers "drive" the dancers. Certain beats of the drum are signals for special movements and postures. On hearing special beats or rolls, the dancers may leap vertically into the air, or perform a *laillé* (a swirling motion that causes the skirts to flare out), or a *djaillé* (excitement motions). Increased tension among the dancers may cause the drummers to shift the beat, or to increase

[1] Brandy or rum with gunpowder is sometimes drunk by persons possessed by the Ioa Ogoun, deity of war. Cf. P. 352, Cat. 116. --Analyst

[2] Moore, op. cit., P 238. Cf. P. 352, Cat. 116. --Analyst

troupe. The chorus and leader sing responsively, their parts overlapping in traditional African style. The shoulder movements, foot movements, the way the arms are carried, and the typical posture of feet flat on the ground, bent knees, and swayed back—all are of African derivation.

These postures and movements are broad and direct. There are few of the decorative and "fine" movements that one sees in the dancers of Indonesia, Cambodia, and India. Where the Javanese lays stress on the pose of the hands and the delicate movements of the fingers, the Haitian dancer is concerned with the position of the arms and the motions of the shoulders. The Indonesian sense of poised balance or suspended movement is absent. In its place there is an attitude of strong frontal assault against natural forces such as gravity, or direct submission to those forces. There is almost always a feeling of solidity and stability in Haitian posture, and of a proximity between the body and the earth, but the total effect is dynamic. Indonesian dancing seems to express a comprehension of the unseen and the supernatural; Haitian dancing seems to express an intimate understanding of nature.

Dancing touches on virtually every aspect of life in Haiti. It plays a part in the supplication of loa, the placation of the dead, and the making of magic; in the consecration of a *hounfor*, the installation of a houngan, and the initiation of cult members; in planting, harvesting, and house-building; Catholic Church holidays, Nine Nights, baptisms, the election of a new president, and ordinary social gatherings—all are celebrated, in part, at least, by dancing.

Haitian dancing is participative rather than exhibitionistic. It is to join rather than to watch. There are some dances, however, which require special skills, and a few which are highly individualistic. Several types of dances are described elsewhere in this book. Verbal description cannot do justice to an art such as dancing, of course; but some brief sketches may help to suggest the differences between one Haitian dance and another.

In the Congo Manzone, for example, men and women pair off and dance face to face, making contact occasionally but only briefly. The arms are stretched forward as though to embrace the partner around the waist, but the actual embrace never materializes. The partners dance sometimes as though they are unaware of each other and are simply part of a larger group; then they approach, move as mirrored reproductions, and separate. Loin movement is free, and there is a restrained sexual intensity, though direct sexual implications are not necessarily present. Sometimes the woman holds the hem of her skirt in her hands, while the man holds his jacket open toward his partner.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

535 The Pétro dance is similar in many respects to other serious cult dances, but it is primarily a complicated and sometimes agitated foot dance. The second of the two drums beats "rest-two-three." On "two" the right foot pushes forward in a thrusting, sliding motion, and on "three" the left moves outward and the right moves in. The position is held on the "rest," though there is no visible pause, because of the speed of the dance. Shoulder movement is only of secondary importance in the Pétro, though the arms are constantly moving gracefully to balance the foot movements. Women sometimes use a typical Congo pose, with the left hand on the hip and the right hand held poised in the air.

The Jouvalo, the supplication dance of the Dahomey rites, is quite different in both spirit and technique. The dancers, usually older rather than younger people, move in a generally counterclockwise direction around the sacred center post of the dance court. They dance with gracefully bent backs, their hands touching their knees. The shoulders and the upper part of the body move forward and back in a gentle, graceful, undulating movement. The dancers pirouette lightly from time to time, the women holding their long skirts out to the side to make a restrained *kaklé*. They sometimes pause to perform a brief cross step with other dancers, but there is no pairing off. They are dancing as individuals—or, more accurately, as a group. There is occasional improvising, inventing, and performing of difficult maneuvers; but the individual dancer moves always with the others in a slowly revolving amorphous circle around the center post. The graceful bending and undulating of the upper body give even to strangers an impression of respectful supplication.

Near the town of Jérémie in southern Haiti some years ago I saw a performance of the Mouzondi "battle-dance," an activity of the Congo "nation." The dance was performed by six men, several of them stripped [291] to the waist, the others wearing the traditional blue denim peasant jackets. The leader of the dancers was a bearded man about fifty years [301] old, lean and athletic. On his legs he wore anklets made of seed pods and [534] beer-bottle caps which rattled rhythmically as he moved. On a string around his neck he wore a wooden whistle, which he blew from time to time to accent the beat of the drums and to give signals.

[533] The dancing took place around a bonfire. The music was provided by three musicians, two playing Congo drums and the third beating hardwood sticks against a board. Each of the dancers carried a stick about thirty inches long. They moved first clockwise, then counterclockwise, then half of them moved in one direction and half in the other, weaving in and out, holding their sticks like sabers. On a signal given by the

[illegible]
[illegible] is here my own self
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] is a single dram which dissolves
[illegible], my father!
[illegible]
[illegible] is here my own self

575 It is told of the Vizhindingue that their members are sometimes required to subject themselves to the ordeal of rubbing hot peppers in their eyes, which results in acute pain and temporary blindness. According to some explanations, this is one of the "tests" of a Vizhindingue man. Red, inflamed eyes are a standard symbol of malevolence. One informant explained that the Vizhindingue members blind themselves so that they cannot see what kind of flesh they are eating:

[537]
[538]

M'en pété m'you wé kaleen ma nakré pimont!
M'en pété m'you wé kaleen ma nakré dété! [Ex. 125]

My eyes are blind, I can't see, I've put pepper in them!
My eyes are blind, I can't see, I've put fire in them!

575 Another Vizhindingue song is a humorously macabre dialogue between
[illegible] the members of the society and a victim. He is asked whether he would
[illegible] prefer to be quartered or eaten whole. Each time they are about to act
[illegible] according to his wishes he changes his mind:

Dévor a dépoutier ga ne pinki? Dépoutier!
C'en couche dévoré ga ne pinki?
Main'm aurez dépoutier!

C'en couche dévoré ga ne pinki?
Dévor a dépoutier ga ne pinki?
Main pimi dévoré!

Dévor a dépoutier ga ne pinki?
Dévor a dépoutier ga ne pinki?
Main pimi dépoutier! [Ex. 126]

Devouré ne quartouré, which do you prefer? To be quartouré!
Cut up ne devouré, which do you prefer?
I've been quartouré enough!

Cut up ne devouré, which do you prefer?
Devouré ne quartouré, which do you prefer?
I'd sooner be devouré!

Devouré ne quartouré, which do you prefer?
Devouré ne quartouré, which do you prefer?
I'd sooner be quartouré!

dramatic art. The narrator interprets his characters as he goes along, providing different voices, singing, giving humorous or tragic emphasis, and changing his facial expressions to convey the temper and mood of the protagonists. He imitates the movements and actions of the animals. In print, his broad gestures and sly intimations are all lost. The Haitian tale is a vehicle for the actor, who plays his theme according to circumstances and the responsiveness of his audience. The storyteller, like the musician, is likely to be found almost anywhere. But there are storytellers of special renown, known as *maît' conte*—who may be called upon to entertain young people at a party or Nine Night gathering. They have seemingly endless repertoires and can go on indefinitely telling tales about Bouki and Malice, or Jean Sotte and Jean L'Esprit. In former times, the *maît' conte* used an instrument such as the *hoove* to interperse his narration with music. Old people recall that trough zithers and other instruments of African design were once employed for this purpose.

Anansi, the spider trickster-hero and buffoon of West Africa, has survived in Haiti as well as elsewhere in the Antilles. In Jamaica and other British islands, Anansi has become Brother Anansi, Sister Nancy, or just plain Nancy. Although he usually figures in tales dealing with other animals, he has more and more come to assume a human form, as he has in Haitian tales. But in Haiti the name Anansi is only rarely heard. Anansi's cleverness and stupidity are now attributed to two characters named Ti Malice and Nonc' Bouki, both of whom are regarded as human beings.

In West Africa the spider hero directed his mischief against the great and strong creatures of the forest, now one, now another. In Haiti, Ti Malice, who has inherited Anansi's wit and guile, pits himself mostly against Bouki, who has inherited Anansi's stubborn nature and his pompous stupidities. Ti Malice (whose first name probably comes from the Spanish *tío*, uncle) has become the slick sharpy of the city, the clever and predatory "operator," the practical joker. Like his spider prototype, Ti Malice has humor as well as cunning, though he is often remorseless. Bouki is full of self-confidence but is slow-witted and an easy prey for Ti Malice. He is thought of as a clumsy peasant of the mountains. He has a constant desire to pit himself against Ti Malice, and a capacity for involving himself in utterly fantastic situations which appeal to the Haitian sense of the ridiculous.

In many respects this team of comedians resembles another pair known in South and Central America—Tío Conejo (Uncle Rabbit) and Tío Coyote; both are pranksters, but the rabbit usually manages to outwit the coyote. Ti Malice and Bouki also figure in the universal tar-baby story, and in many other tales known in the United States in which Br'er Rabbit

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17. Children's World: Gage Songs and Games

On the night of last prayers for a deceased person, and on other party occasions, children while away the hours until bedtime with special songs and games. Sometimes the games are led by an older member of the family. More often, left to their own devices, the children play unsupervised. It is regarded as fitting that the youngest members of the community should be enjoying themselves while the last rites are being held for one who has recently died. This view is held not merely in regard to children; older people, too, engage in gay activities, such as dancing the Juba.

Many children's games are known throughout the country, others have only a regional popularity. The games mentioned here are among those played in southern Haiti, mainly in the neighborhood of the capital, Port-au-Prince.

One favorite is known as Balancé Yaya. The children—as few as four or as many as ten or twelve—crouch on the ground in a circle. Each of them has a stone in his hand, which he strikes rhythmically on the earth as they sing together:

Jésus, Marie, Joseph oh,
Rat li mangé pigeon moin,
Jésus, Marie, Joseph oh,
Rat li mangé pigeon moin,
Rat passé, Rabinette passé,
Pat' ti Marie manché, allé li. . . . [Ex. 129]

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, oh,
The rat has eaten my pigeon.
Jesus, Mary, Joseph, oh,
The rat has eaten my pigeon.
The rat goes by, Rabinette goes by,
Make little Mary walk, go there. . . .

524 On the words *allé là*, each of the players takes his stone in front of another
533 person. There is no fixed direction of rotation, and the stone may be passed to the left or to the right, or even across the circle. This passing of stones continues while the players sing:

539 Roland Yaya,
Yaya oh,
Yaya Madame Morgan,
Roland Yaya monte,
Mais ici' point monte,
C'est pas' Yaya,
Roland Yaya
Yaya oh
Yaya Madame Morgan. [Ex. 129]

Even up, Yaya,
Yaya, oh,
Yaya Madame Morgan,
Even up, my Yaya,
I say my prayers,
They are for Yaya,
Even up, Yaya,
Yaya, oh,
Yaya Madame Morgan.

While this part of the song is being sung, the stones are being passed rapidly this way and that. Players may use only one hand for this purpose, and at some stage one of them finds himself with more stones in front of him than he can dispose of, and he is declared *gaga*, or "it." Then the game begins anew.

524 In another animated game called Thérèse, the boys and girls stand in a circle and sing, clapping hands and going through a variety of postures, gestures, and dance steps. It is a sort of "follow the leader" routine. First, one of the group makes rhythmic motions in time to the music, and the other players must do the same thing. The leader may swing his hips, do fancy footwork, posture with his arms, or twist about, and the others in the circle are obliged to imitate him. Then another child gets his turn to set the pace. One of the songs heard with this game is the following, 533 which imitates the voice of the guinea hen: 539

Cipan Cimalo!
C'est ça maman'in di mais,
Cipan Cimalo!
C'est ça maman'in di mais,
Cipan Cimalo!
Air tain tain Cimalo!
Rang rang rang Cimalo!
Tsink tsink tsink tsink Cimalo!
W, tsink tsink Cimalo!
(And so on, with variations.) [Ex. 130]

Cipan Cimalo!
This is what my mother told me,
Cipan Cimalo!
This is what my mother told me,
Cipan Cimalo!
Air tain tain Cimalo!

Boing tsing tsing Cimale!
Tsuck tsuck tsuck tsuck Cimale!
Wa tsuck tsuck Cimale!

For the game called Dilina, two chairs are required as props. They are placed a few feet from each other, facing toward the center. Behind one chair is a boy, behind the other a girl. The other children clap their hands and sing:

Cuel'm pasel, Dilina!
Cuel'm vitel, c'est Dilina!
Mamman mamman, Dilina!
Papa papa, Dilina!
Mamman mamman, Dilina!
Papa papa, Dilina!
Cuel'm pasel, Dilina!
Cuel'm vitel, c'est Dilina!
Dilina jalel eh jalel, Dilina!
Jalel pasi' la'garet, Dilina! [Ex. 131]

Wherever I pass is Dilina!
Wherever I turn is Dilina!
Grandmother, Dilina!
Grandfather, Dilina!
Grandmother, Dilina!
Grandfather, Dilina!
Wherever I pass is Dilina!
Wherever I turn is Dilina!
Dilina works, eh, works, Dilina!
Works for money, Dilina!

The two children in the center, at a given signal, begin to move, each circling his own chair. The circling continues, the girl pacing her movements in an effort to avoid meeting the boy face to face. The boy times his movements so that he may meet the girl face to face. If and when he accomplishes his purpose he takes his reward—an embrace—and another couple comes forward to repeat the play.

Another game of the courting variety is called Find a Beautiful Woman. A chair is placed in the center of the play area, and a girl is designated to sit there as the "beautiful woman." She has nothing else to do. The others sing:

Chach' yan femme qui belle eh!
Sindé, Sindé Macaya!
Chach' yan femme qui belle, hé?
Sindé, Sindé Macaya! [Ex. 132]

Look for a woman who is beautiful, eh!
Sindé, Sindé Macaya!
Look for a woman who is beautiful, brother!
Sindé, Sindé Macaya!

Holding a kerchief in his hand, one of the children marches or dances around the chair of the "beautiful woman." After several trips around, he retires and drops the kerchief in the lap of another player, who comes forward and repeats the performance. Anyone who refuses to pay his respects to the "beautiful woman" is "it."

Some games are of the personal "test" or ordeal kind. In one of them

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18. Musical Instruments

The Haitian people have drawn heavily on both Europe and Africa for their musical inspiration. In music, as in other traditions, the country is bicultural. There is, on the one hand, the music of the so-called *elite*—the literate and educated class which is concentrated in the cities—and on the other hand, the music of the peasants, the plantation laborers, and the lower economic groups of the towns. The *elite* music is in the European or Western tradition, while the true folk music of Haiti draws, in the main, in the wake of West African musical culture. The instruments of *elite* music are primarily those of Western Europe. The instruments of the folk music of the country are those which can best interpret the mainstream currents of the West African heritage—instruments of African design and function. European-style instruments have infiltrated into the folk music too, but the over-all picture is that of a survival of African musical devices to interpret music cast in an African mold. It is the folk-music instruments which call for examination—the instruments that are made in the villages and tiny huts in the mountains, the instruments on which the significant music of Haiti depends.

The materials from which these instruments are made are usually those found upon the land. If a man wishes to make a drum, he cuts down a tree for the purpose. For material for a bamboo trumpet he goes to the bamboo grove. For a flute, he cuts a reed. Metal is used for making African-style bells, rattles, singing horns, and substitutes for bamboo trumpets.

The drum in its many forms is the most common instrument of all. It is used for dances of all kinds, for cult rites, for work music on the road and in the field, and for assembly calls and signals. Not very many years ago the older people in the south of Haiti still spoke of the "talking drums" they had seen as children.

The craft of drum making is a very skilled one, but the tools are

high. The smallest—the *bula*, or *hêlê* (sometimes called *dondon*)—is about eighteen or twenty inches high. They are all called sometimes by the Yoruba name *bata*, originally applied to a two-headed instrument.

Arada drumheads are of cowhide, held in place by hardwood pegs set into the bodies of the drums at an angle. The drums are tuned by driving in or loosening the pegs. Even the slitting of the skins where the pegs pass through them is African in pattern. In Cuba the drums of the Arada (there called Arará) cult are made in precisely the same way, though they are used in batteries of four rather than three.

In a variation of the peg type of fastening, the skin is attached to a hoop, which, in turn, is held in place by ropes laced to the pegs. Each drum maker has his own preference as to the angle and size of the pegs, the proportions of the drums, and the wood from which they are made. One drum maker near Lôgbaze claimed to be able to identify the region from which a drum came by examination of the pegs and the carvings around the base.

The small Arada drum, the *bula*, is usually "whipped" with two long thin sticks to provide a sharp and penetrating sound. The middle-sized drum is played with one bare hand and a stick. The stick may be straight or bowed. The bowed drumstick is known as an *egida*, the name used for the same type of stick in Dahomey.[1] On infrequent occasions the *mayeo* drum is played with two sticks—one straight and one bowed. The large drum, the *mawuwun*, is played by the most accomplished of the drummers in the orchestra. He plays with one bare hand and one stick, which may be of various forms. It may be straight, have a hook-shaped head, or be mallet-shaped; or it may be the grotesquely twisted stick known as a *Legueto Guinin*. All three forms are known in Dahomey and elsewhere in West Africa.

The three Haitian Arada drums, supplemented by an African-style bell known as an *ogue* and small gourd rattles (*cha-chas*), form the standard orchestra for most dances of the Vodoun cult. The *ogue*—the forged iron bell with an external striker—has all but disappeared in recent years, along with the institution of the village forge. In its place one may see any kind of metallic object, such as a hoe blade, a link of chain, or a length of pipe, all of which are referred to by the old name *ogue*. In Cuba the Arará cult preserves the bell, both in single and double form, under the same name. The word *ogue* probably derives from the Yoruba term for this instrument, *ogoro*.

Playing in concert, the three Arada drums produce a range of tones, and the player of the *mawuwun*—the chief of orchestra—adds to the effect by frequently striking his stick against the side of the drum above

[1] [Herskovits and Herskovits, Suriname Folk-Lore, P. 89 The stick is also known in Suriname. Cf. P. 353, Category 116. -- Analyst]

the pegs. High notes are achieved by striking the drumhead near the rim, and low notes near the center.

The drummers usually sit together on a bench or in chairs at one side of the dance court. The larger and middle drums are slightly tipped to keep their "mouths" open; the *bula* stands squarely on its base and is therefore somewhat muted. The player of the *maseuse* often drums in a standing position, bracing the instrument by means of a cord around his thigh.

Another drum associated with the Arada rites is the *assoto*. This drum is usually about six feet high, and may be from two to two and a half feet in diameter. It is played in an upright position, and two or three small "windows" near the base permit the sound to emerge. This big drum is used only for the *Assoto* services, at which the Dahomey "nation" plays host to the *lwa* of all the various rites. Usually there is only a single drummer, who plays while standing on a bench or raised platform; but on occasion, two or even three drummers play simultaneously on the single drumhead.

It is interesting to note in passing that most of the Vodoun drums have Dahomean names and are of Dahomean design, despite the fact that Yoruban religious motifs have survived. The Yoruban double-headed *bata* drum, used in Nigeria for invocation of the principal deities, appears to have survived in decadent form on the island of La Gonave, where it is known as *pongavi*. Curiously, it is played not like the Yoruban *bata* (one hand on each head) but like another Yoruban instrument, the *dundun*, or pressure drum. The instrument is held under one arm and played only on the forward head. Significantly enough, this drum is said to be used only for Nago (Yoruba) rites. Another drum reserved for Nago services is found in the region of Limonade. It resembles the Arada drum in every respect except that it stands on three carved legs.

Drums associated with the services of the Congo "nation" are distinctly different from those found in Vodoun ritual. No drumsticks are used, and the heads are of goatskin rather than cowhide and are held in place by a system of cords and hoops. The Congo drum sets today stands about three feet high; old people say that within their memory there was a variety of Congo drum as tall as a man. Unlike the Arada drum, the Congo drum usually has no carved or painted decoration. For the "pure" Congo rites, two of these instruments, accompanied by gourd or metal rattles of various kinds, constitutes an orchestra. One typically Congo rattling device, called *mayoya*, consists of three large gourds containing pebbles, on the top of a long pole.

A variant of the Congo drum is used for Petro rites. It is similar

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Hall SV3

easily be hidden, but the ganbos were simply slipped into the straw roofs and thus put out of sight. Moreover, by some strange process of reasoning, military authorities regarded the bamboos as "harmless," though they were used for the same purposes as the contraband drums.

There are numerous other kinds of simple percussion devices. One such instrument, now less commonly seen than previously, is a length of open bamboo laid in the crotches of two Y-shaped sticks set in the ground. Like other *cutas*, the bamboo is beaten with two sticks. Some Haitians believe that in former days such bamboos were played in batteries like a xylophone.

Sometimes a light-weight wooden cylinder, or perhaps a drum denuded of its playing head, is carried by the timekeeper of a coumbite. It, also, is played on the side with sticks.

Wooden mortars for pulverizing grain take on the character of musical instruments when used in combination with voices. When two or more mortars are used, with two men or women wielding the long polelike pestles in each mortar, the rhythmic effects can become fairly complicated.

The *claves* or *palos* (small hardwood sticks) are used primarily in connection with secular dances of a Cuban type, or to accompany such instruments as the guitar and the marimba. One stick is held loosely in the natural fold of the hand, so that it is free to vibrate, and is struck sharply with the second stick. The tone is almost metallic because of the hardness of the wood, usually lignum vitae. The name of the instrument is recognizable as a form of *clavar*, or *clavo*, Spanish for "peg" or "nail." It is thought that wooden shipbuilding pegs provided the name for this device, which has equivalents in West Africa.

Among the folk instruments there are various kinds of horns and trumpets. Cows' horns are played musically in some parts of the southern peninsula, though usually they are used as ritual instruments and signaling devices. Wooden trumpets called *pistons* are carved from the stems of the papaya tree. Conch-shell trumpets, known as *lambis*, are commonly used as signaling devices by fishermen. They are also to be found among the coumbites, in Rara festivities, and occasionally in rituals, where they are usually identified with sea deities. In carnival times the old fashioned phonograph horn makes its appearance as a combined trumpet and voice amplifier.

Probably the most important of the trumpets is the one made of bamboo. It is called a *sarcine* or *bois bourrique*. Both names have interesting origins. The cow's horn was at one time used for magico-medical purposes. The leaf doctor used it as an "applicator" of powders and potions. A small opening was made in the point of the horn, and

[See plate 8, P. 112-F. -- Analyst]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1965) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

the horn itself was filled with the magico-medical preparation, which was called *vaccine*. The point of the horn was applied to parts of the body which needed treatment, and the powers of the potion were thus transmitted to the affected areas. In time, the cow's horn itself came to be known as a *vaccine*. Eventually the horn used for musical purposes took over the name, which was then transferred to the bamboo trumpet. The other name by which the bamboo trumpet is known, *bois bourrique*, means burro wood. But it probably is a corruption of *voix bourrique*, meaning "donkey's voice," an accurate description of the sound it makes.

The vaccine consists of a length of bamboo, with a joint membrane at one end cut into a mouthpiece. Trumpets of different sizes give different tones, and three to five of them together constitute a vaccine orchestra. Vaccines are employed by the coumbites in the fields, and they are heard in the towns and cities primarily during the pre-Easter festivities. In the Rara festivals the vaccine players march together, blowing and tapping their trumpets with sticks, followed by a crowd of dancers. Traditionally, the bamboo trumpet is not employed in religious music, although in recent years it has made its appearance occasionally in Congo-Guinée rites.

There are two kinds of musical scrapers. The one more often seen is the *grage*, a piece of sheet metal perforated in the fashion of our common kitchen grater. It is "played" by scraping a piece of wire or a nail across its rough surface. Found in secular rather than religious settings, the grage is likely to be used in combination with such instruments as the *tambourine*, marimba, claves, and basse. The second form of scraper is the *dentlé*, or *dentli*, a notched stick played with a bamboo scraping blade. The free end of the stick is sometimes braced against a bench or a plank, which acts as a sounding board. Some Haitians reported that in the old days gourds were used as sounding chambers. The scraper in one form or another appears to have both Indian and West African precedents. Its relationship to the washboard as used in Negro folk music in the United States is obvious. The notched gourd called the *guiro*, found in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and other West Indian islands, appears to be present in Haiti only as an imported instrument.

Rattles of various types are used in religious and secular dances, in the invocation of deities, and as accompaniment for solo singing. The most common of the rattles is the simple cha-cha, or *kwa-kwa*. It is a small gourd with a wooden handle, with seeds inside. It is usually played by the singing leader as a device to keep time. Sometimes the long dry seed pods of the cha-cha tree are used as a substitute.

In the Rara season two special rattles are used. One of them is made

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1bio SV3 Hait SV3

its tension is varied by pressure on the bowed stick with the other hand, producing a change of pitch. The covered hole acts as a sound chamber.

In a "portable" model of the mosquito drum a tin pail or can is used for a sounding chamber. The pail is inverted and fastened to a small plank, to which the sapling also is affixed. It is believed by some observers that the instrument has special significance during the pre-Easter holidays (Mardi Gras and Rara),[1] but it may be used at almost any time of the year. The "accompaniment" for the mosquito drum usually consists of some kind of *cata*—sticks beaten upon a board or on the drumhead itself. On occasion, two or three of these instruments are beaten together, and the rough bark membrane may be rasped for additional effects. Most of the songs that go with the mosquito drum are secular. One of the appropriate songs favored by children goes:

Maringouin dit moin ta zwing oh!
Maringouin dit moin ta zwing!
Ta zwing oh!
Ta zwing! [Ex. 166]

Mosquito says I will zwing, oh!
Mosquito says I will zwing!
Will zwing, oh!
Will zwing! *

The earth bow has a clear African ancestry. In almost identical form it has been found in the French Sudan, among the Washambala of East Africa, the Bongos in the eastern Congo, the Bafia and Baya in the Cameroons, the Fulbe in the Sahara region, and the Futadjallon people in Nigeria.[2]

The German explorer Georg Schweinfurth might have been describing a Haitian scene when he wrote, some eighty-five years ago, of the Bongos:

> Performers may be seen sitting for an hour together with an instrument of this sort: They stick one end of the bow into the ground, and fasten the string over a cavity covered with bark, which opens into an aperture for the escape of the sound. They pass one hand from one part of the bow to another, and with the other they play upon the string with the bamboo twig and produce a variety of humming airs which are really rather pretty. This is a common pastime with the lads who are put in charge of the goats. I have seen them apply themselves very earnestly and with obvious interest to their musical practice, and the ingenious use to which they apply the secrets of the theory of sound.[3]

* The hum of the mosquito as it strikes.

1. [Comhaire Sylvain, Les Contes haitiens, pp. 97-98. Cf. p. 354, category 116. -- Analyst]
2. [Curt Sachs, Geist und Werden der Musikinstrumente (Berlin, 1929), pp. 60-61. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116. -- Analyst]
3. [Schweinfurth, The Heart of Africa, I, 287. Cf. p. 354 category 116. -- Analyst]

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5. Translations of Songs in Chapter 19

533 539 Many of the Creole song texts included with the music in chapter 19 are translated and explained in earlier chapters. The following examples are translations of song texts in chapter 19 to which there is no reference elsewhere in the book.

EXAMPLE 133

Ézilie Wèdo, *ago*, oh!
The Creoles say like this,
I am not in Africa any more,
I shall do as I please!
The Creoles say like this,
I am not in Africa any more,
I shall do as I please, oh!
I bring myself,
I take myself away,
I do what I please, oh!

[196] [192] (Ézilie Wèdo is the name of a loa. She boasts that she comes to Haiti and returns to Africa whenever she wishes. The word *ago* is exclamatory and means something like "I am here.")

EXAMPLE 134

The Forty Days [Lent], three women, three virgins,
Prayers for the saints, prayers for the walking saints!
Prayers for the loa Saint Antoine, oh, we ask your pardon!

EXAMPLE 135

In Africa are loa, oh!
Èvo èvo, hounsi kanzo!
Èvo èvo, hounsi kanzo!
In Africa are loa, *aibobo!*

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

(*Evo évo* is ritual language. Hounsi kanzo are the servitors of the hounfor being addressed by an unidentified loa.)

EXAMPLE 136

Achadé, oh, oh!
Achadé, I have no mother here to speak for me!
Achadé, oh!
Achadé, I have no mother here to speak for me!
Oh Achadé, oh!
Ogoun is bad, oh!
Achadé Papa!
Ogoun is bad, oh!
Etc.

(The song is addressed to the loa Achadé; it complains of the behavior of another loa, Ogoun.)

EXAMPLE 137

Beat the drum for me!
I shall . . . , beat the drum for me!
Etc.
Three times after the Angelus, oh!
Three times after the Angelus, oh!

(This appears to be a children's game song. Three "times" after the Angelus would be three hours after six o'clock in the evening.)

EXAMPLE 138

Liberist fell down!
Liberist fell down! *Adié!*
I am sending a whip for his back!
Etc.

(A children's game song.)

EXAMPLE 139

Adaïzo!
Miyenvalo Aloko, my Loko, Adaïzo!
Miyenvalo Aloko, my Loko, Adaïzo!
Miyenvalo my Loko, Adaïzo!
Etc.

(This is a song of supplication to the loa Loko. The word *miyenvalo* signifies supplication.)

EXAMPLE 140

Ten cents is not a dollar,
Cousin, don't take cousin, oh, cousin!

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1965) 1960 SV3 Hahi SV3

Cousin, oh, cousin, oh,
Cousin, don't take cousin, oh, cousin!

(A *gourdain* is one-quarter of a gourde, or the equivalent of five cents in United States money. *Dé gourdain* is ten cents.)

EXAMPLE 141 consists entirely of ritual language.

EXAMPLE 142

Call Damballa, call Domici, call Damballa Wèdo,
Damballa, call Damballa Wèdo, Damballa.

(Damballa and Domici are the names of loa.)

EXAMPLE 143

Ibo, I am a big man, oh!
Ibo, I am a big man, oh!
Ibo, I am the patriarch, oh, I am the patriarch, oh,
I am the chief of my house!

(Ibo is the name of a loa, from whose point of view the song is being sung. Ibo is stating his seniority in his house, or family, for there are other loa related to him. The word *grand* in Creole, as used here, is difficult to translate. It means good or elder, or both. A *grand famille* is the oldest in the extended family, and usually carries the connotation of head or chief.)

EXAMPLE 144

Ibo Ibo é, Samardi Kama!
Etc.

(Samardi Kama is the name of a loa of the Ibo family. The song consists of a repetition of his name, with variations.)

EXAMPLE 145

Ibo Ibo é, Marianni é!
Etc., with variations.

(This is a song to the loa Marianni, of the Ibo family. Except for his name, in various combinations, there are no words.)

EXAMPLE 146 is a song for the making of magic. It is entirely in ritual language.

EXAMPLE 147

Call Osange, call Labosan in the water!
Osange, oh, call Osange in the water!
Osange, oh, call Osange in the water!

2: Courlander B-5 (1837-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

(A song for the loa Osange. Literally, the song specifies Osange "in the water," but the sense is "under the water," where the loa reside.

EXAMPLE 148

Yabofé my dear, they don't need me!
I will see [enter through] the center post if they *djaguél*
Yabofé my dear, they don't need me!
I will see the center post if they *djaguél*
Ferei doesn't see me any more!
I will see the center post if they *djaguél*

(Yabofé and Ferei are the names of loa. Even though addressed as "Yabofé my dear," it is Yabofé who is speaking. If one thinks of it as "Dear Yabofé says," the shifting point of view becomes less confusing. The term *djaguél* indicates a kind of tension and excitement which builds up before possessions take place. Yabofé says that if the people *djaguél* he is prepared to enter through the center post.)

EXAMPLE 149

Take me (to go), oh!
To the house, oh!

EXAMPLE 150

Damballa! Damballa!
Damballa Wèdo Damballa!
Damballa, *enhé!*
Sacred Damballa! Damballa!

(The song is an invocation to the loa Damballa. The word *enhé* is exclamatory.)

EXAMPLE 151

Ibo *Lélé*, oh!

(Ibo Lélé is the name of a loa.)

EXAMPLE 152

We thread our way [like a snake],
Damballa Wèdo is a snake, oh!

(The "threading" is a description of conventionalized dance movements suggesting the crawling of a snake. The loa Damballa is identified as a snake.)

EXAMPLE 153

Loko Sindé asks for wind, él

533
539 Wind, wind, wind, Loko Sindé asks for wind!
Wind, wind, wind!

[996] (The loa Loko Sindé calls for wind to make the sailboat move.)

EXAMPLE 154

Innocent, don't you see I'm innocent!
It is God in heaven who will judge me!
Innocent, don't you see I'm innocent!
It is God in heaven who will judge me!
Ferei's goat here looks for the water road!
The goat of the saints seeks the road to the house!
In Africa everyone is sick, oh!
Papa, I will save them!

EXAMPLE 155

Marianni, oh!
Adié, Moundongue!
Marianni!
To the other side I am passing!
I am leaving here!

[996] (This is a song to the loa Marianni Moundongue. He says he is leaving the hounfor to return to the other side—that is, Africa.)

EXAMPLE 156

Azui, oh, I am a snake, oh!
Azui Papa, I am a snake, oh!
Azui, oh, I am a snake, oh!
Azui Papa, I am a snake, oh!
Don't you see the pouin there is spoiled?
Don't you see the pouin there is spoiled?
It has rolled into the mud!
I sound my asson!

[996] (Azui is a loa characterized as a snake. The second part of the song is topical. It appears that a pouin, or magic bundle, has fallen into the mud and been soiled. The last line represents words of the houngan, who shakes his ritual rattle.)

EXAMPLE 157

Ah! It is I, it is I, it is I!
It is I, oh, it is Mademoiselle Ayida, it is I!
Sitting by the boat there they speak ill of us (me), oh!
It is I, oh, it is I, centerpost, it is I!

[996] (Mademoiselle Ayida is the loa Ayida Wèdo.)

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Example 158

Ayida isn't joking, oh!
Ayida isn't joking with them!
Enla, [ritual] language, oh!
Ayida isn't joking, oh!
Ayida isn't joking with them!
Those who wish to be satisfied are satisfied!
Those who wish to be angry are angry, oh!
Ayida, oh!
Ayida isn't joking with them!

Example 159

Long live the king and dear queen, oh!
Another misfortune, [they] talk behind my back!
Long live the king and dear queen, oh!
Another misfortune, [they] talk behind my back!
Fire, oh, heat!
Fire, oh, heat, oh!
Another misfortune, [they] talk behind my back!

Example 160

Legba Aguator é!
Oh what loa are you?
Agó I am a loa!
Legba Aguator é!
Oh what loa are you here?
Quitti quitti yé, oh, I am a Nago loa!
Legba Aguator é! What loa are you!

Example 161

Oh, *colico ya ya,* my little banza, *colico!*
In truth, *colico ya ya,* my little banza, *colico!*
Colico ya ya, my little banza, *colico!*
A non paillé colico ya ya, my little banza, *colico!*

(A children's story song. The italicized parts are not translatable. The banza is a small musical instrument; currently the word is used for a banjo or fiddle, formerly it designated an instrument of African origin.) [534]

Example 162

Adié Compère Frog, that is not running!
Frog hops, ti dong, ti dong dong, frog hops!

(A children's song from a story about a race between the frog and the horse.)

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1968) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

533 EXAMPLE 163
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The pig says wain!
The pig says wain, hot mama!
Etc.
See the pig having fun!
Enhh, enhh, hot mama!

(A children's *gage* song.)

EXAMPLE 164

Bwèment rwo!
Adieu, Bwèment, make Bwèment walk!
Bwèment, that's it, that's it, Bwèment!
Make Bwèment walk!

(A children's game song.)

533 EXAMPLE 165
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You arrive, Rigal, you enter!
You arrive, Rigal, you arrive!
When Rigal turned into a large pig,
He came to Jacmel to eat us!

(This song names a specific individual, Rigal, as having turned into a pig, like a member of the Vinbindingue Society, but it is not clear whether it is intended to be taken seriously or is merely banter.)

EXAMPLE 166

I will zwing, oh!
The mosquito says I will zwing, oh!
Etc.

534 (Zwing is the sound the mosquito makes. The song is usually sung to the accompaniment of the *tambour maringouin*, or mosquito drum.)

EXAMPLE 167

The small boy stands on the terrace,
He stamps his feet *dao dao!*
The small boy stands on the terrace,
He stamps his feet *dao dao!*
Oh, [unchained?] gives them *paillette*, oh!
The small boy stands on the terrace,
He stamps his feet *dao dao!*
[Unchained?] gives them *paillette*, oh!
Furiously gives them *paillette*, oh!
Mayousse!
Find your woman, *mayousse!*
Mayou-yousse!

2: Courlander B-5 (1927-1955) 1960 8V3 Haiti 8V3

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Your share, *mayouse*!
Find your woman, *mayouse*!
Mayou-pouse!

(*Paillette* means "all decorated up," "fancy," "in carnival regalia." It is also the name of a dance, as is *mayouse*, used here as an exclamation.) [192] [535]

EXAMPLE 168 was said to be in "Spanish."

EXAMPLE 169

Go to your mother's house,
Go to your mother's house,
Go to your mother's house, my dear,
Do not come and give me an argument!
Go to your mother's house, my dear,
Go to your mother's house, my dear,
Go to your mother's house, my dear,
And do not give me an argument!
Little girl who doesn't know how to wash and iron,
Go home to your mother,
Little girl who doesn't know how to wash and iron,
Go home to your mother!
Angelico, Angelico, go to your mother's house!
Angelico, Angelico, go to your mother's house!

EXAMPLE 172

Oh I'm not a mule,
Oh I'm not a mule, oh!
The farmer takes me to carry his coffee!

(A good-natured protest song of the kind often sung by coumbites.) [496]

EXAMPLE 173 has no text. It is exclamatory throughout.

EXAMPLE 174

É Laiza, where should I go, Laiza é!
Laiza, the children are hypocrites, oh!
Etc.

EXAMPLE 175

Ewa Mambo Susan, I am cutting trees
To take away the honey!

EXAMPLE 176

Adieu kining kining kining,
Oh I say my prayer to God to send rain!

(The first line is ritual language, but it appears to have been originally a phrase recited by the prêt' savane.) [198]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1968) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

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EXAMPLE 178

Osan, oh, Lèlè, oh!
Osan, oh, Lèlè, oh!
They take the ason of the loa and serve evil, oh!
Let it sink!

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(The song criticizes someone who has become a houngan and has used his powers wrongly. Osan Lèlè is the loa to whom the complaint is being addressed, or he may be the one lodging the complaint.)

EXAMPLE 179

Farmer, call the loa for me, *ago-é!*
Farmer, call the loa for me *now*,
Call the loa for me now,
Gèdé has engaged me!

976
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(Gèdé is a loa. *Habitant* signifies "farmer" or "peasant" but could be translated as "countryman.")

EXAMPLE 180

Boulicha, I arrive,
See my misfortune!
I will cut them, I have no knife!
Boulicha Nago, I will cut them, *malovié!*

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(The loa Boulicha Nago announces his arrival and complains that people have mistreated him. He says he will avenge himself without a knife. *Malovié* is ritual language.)

EXAMPLE 181

I am going to see the hounsi bossale, oh,
I am going to see if they are in accord with me.
Etc.

EXAMPLE 182

I cry honor before my loa's altar,
Cry honor, and no one replies!
I cry honor before my loa's altar,
Cry honor, and no one replies!
All who speak well [of me], I am here, I will listen, oh!
All who speak evil [of me], I am here, I will listen to them!
They sign my name, Allala, but they do not sign my feet,
I ask where will they see me!

2: Courlander B-S (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

CHAPTER 5: *Services for the Loa and the Family Ancestors* (*pp. 41-74*)

[1]Note that the houngan and the laplace are performing services normally performed by the *petit serviteur*.

[2]Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, 165.

[3]Parsons, *Spirit Cult in Haiti*.

[4]Account given by Jean Ravel Pintro.

[5]Informant: Albert Kofi Prempeh, Ghana.

[6]Account given by Volunka Saintvil, A. W. Cardinall notes in his book *Tales Told in Togoland* (p. 69): "Trees are in most cases treated with respect. Before a man dare fell one for a canoe he must and invariably does sacrifice to its spirit and apologizes for the harm he is about to do it."

[7]The rite of *rafraîchi tête* is conducted periodically for a *maît' tête* after the original *lavé tête* ceremony. The purpose is to "refresh" the loa and make him content with his residence in the head of the devotee.

[8]Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past*, p. 213.

[9]It is of interest to note the perseverance of traditional attitudes toward water rites in certain Negro cults in the United States. River baptism often is attended by ecstatic seizures in familiar form.

[10]Odette Mennesson Rigaud, "Notes on Two Marriages with Vaudoux Loa," in Appendix A of Deren, *Divine Horsemen*, p. 264.

CHAPTER 6: *Songs of the Peristyle* (*pp. 75-94*)

[1]This theme is further commented on in chap. 13. Compare with the following excerpt from a Surinam song reported by Herskovits in *Suriname Folk-Lore* (p. 689):

I have no mother there,
I have no father there,
I have no sister there,
I haven't got anybody there.

CHAPTER 7: *In the Mapou Tree: Magic, Demons, and Compacts* (*pp. 95-104*)

[1]Simpson, "Haitian Magic," *Social Forces*, October, 1940, p. 97.

[2]Note the coincidence of the term *gris-gris* or *grigri* as used in the United States, where it has the same meaning as *mojo*, or "voodoo" charm.

[3]Simpson, "Haitian Peasant Economy," *Journal of Negro History*, October, 1940, p. 503.

[4]Herskovits, *Dahomey*, II, p. 243.

CHAPTER 8: *Mardi Gras and Rara: Jugglers, Maypoles, and Kings* (*pp. 105-109*)

[1]Aubin, *En Haïti*, p. 42.

[2]Marionettes of this kind have been observed in both East and West Africa and are well known in the region of Senegal. I saw a phallic marionette, virtually identical with the Haitian version, in the neighborhood of Khartoum, Sudan.

CHAPTER 9: *Land and Work* (*pp. 110-121*)

[1]Franklin, *The Present State of Hayti*, p. 362.

[2]Herskovits, *Dahomey*, I, 300 ff., describes Dahomean polygamous marriage in its various forms. Although Dahomean plural marriage is complex in terms of gifts, obligations, and

2: Courlander 8-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

relations between the husband and the wife's family, it is nevertheless commonplace for men who can afford it to have more than one wife.

[2]Simpson, in "Sexual and Familial Institutions in Northern Haiti," *American Anthropologist*, October-December, 1942, p. 656, observes that in northern Haiti there are three distinct types of placage. "A *femme-caille* shares her mate's house, while a *maman pitite* is a woman who has born children for a man without living in his house. A *femme placée* does not live in her consort's house, and she has given him no children." Although none of these women has any legal rights of inheritance, Simpson notes, "moral claims to a man's property stand in descending order for these three classes of placées."

[3]Johnston, *The Negro in the New World*.

[4]UNESCO, *The Haiti Pilot Project*, p. 18.

[5]Simpson, "Haitian Peasant Economy," *Journal of Negro History*, October, 1940, p. 315.

[6]The group work patterns of Haiti show a common ancestry with Negro gang work patterns in the United States. While nothing as formalized as the coumbite persists among American Negroes, similarities are striking. The emphasis on rhythm, the swinging of hammers or picks in unison, the need for a singing leader, the responsive chorus, and the frequent use of some kind of percussion to keep time, all derive from a common concept of the nature of group work.

[7]Herskovits, "Some Aspects of Dahomean Ethnology," *Africa*, Vol. V (July, 1932), pp. 266–276.

[8]Cardinall, *Tales Told in Togoland* (p. 109), observes that among the Krachi people of Togoland "no man may have sexual intercourse with a woman for seven days before he goes hunting."

[9]An Ashanti story told by Rattray in *Akan-Ashanti Folk-Tales* credits the hedgehog with owning the original hoe; according to this version, the hoe escaped across the sea to the country of the white men, who then possessed the secret. Afterward, the white men brought many hoes to Ashanti.

Chapter 11: *Dancing and Dance Drama* (*pp. 126–136*)

[1]Quoted in Courlander, *Haiti Singing*, p. 73.

[2]Actually a banjo-like instrument of African provenience. The similarity of the word *banza* to *banjo* appears to be more than a coincidence.

[3]Saint-Méry, *De la danse*, as translated by Lillian Moore in "Moreau de Saint-Méry and Dance," *Dance Index*, October, 1946, p. 238.

[4]Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

[5]Brandy or rum with gunpowder is sometimes drunk by persons possessed by the loa Ogoun, deity of war.

[6]Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

[7]United Nations photograph no. 62065.

[8]Students of United States Negro life will recognize the word *coundjaille* as a variant of *coonjine*, a dance known on the lower Mississippi. According to one observer, Dr. Willis James of Spelman College, Atlanta, small Negro boys on the docks used to call to the boat passengers:

> "Throw me a nickel
> Throw me a dime
> If you want to see me
> Do the coonjine."

The term *coonjine* is still used to mean hand-loading of cotton bales on river boats. When this loading was done mainly by hand some years ago, the stevedores worked rhythmically in a line and sang. An old man from Louisiana testified that within his own memory the dockside *coonjine* was accompanied by makeshift drums and other percussion.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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527 On Saturday nights one hears the drums beating all over the country, but if one follows the sound he is more than likely to end [534] up at nothing more esoteric than a neighborhood dance. Other [535] musical instruments than drums are rare, but any community has drums; and these set a rhythm to which one can dance. Generally food is available at these affairs, as well as drinks both hard and soft. 273 It is not extraordinary to discover that a few of the men have drunk rather freely of clairin, the raw rum of the country; most drunkenness seems to lead to good-natured ribaldry rather than to offensive violence. It is unusual for a drunken man to cause damage of any 535 serious nature. The dancing corresponds neither to American ballroom dancing nor to set folk dancing. Most of it is done solo, and an individual participates or remains on the outskirts of the enclosure as • 533 the mood of the moment impels him. Over the beat of the drum can be heard one of the current songs, more than likely a bit smutty in nature, and frequently poking fun at some well-known personage, or making allusions which in normal speech might seem crude.

541 One of the popular Sunday afternoon sports is the *gagwère*, or cock- [525] fight, held under a shelter back of a home. Much small betting goes on. The spectators sit or stoop close around the dusty ring, talking to the cock they are backing, commenting on the fight, offering advice to the owner. Between rounds the cocks are rubbed down, sprayed with water or rum, fondled and excited anew. Toward the latter stages of any fight the spectacle becomes gory and, to the uninitiated, distinctly cruel.

526 There is singularly little sport in Haiti. Élite youths play tennis; boys enjoy football; and swimming is a common diversion. Few sports are competitive and, so far as the writer has observed, the peasants have in their games practically nothing resembling organization.